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*Isaiah Thomas*





THE  
ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BY

JOHN ARMSTRONG, M. D.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED  
A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE POEM.

By J. ALKIN, M. D.

WALPOLE, N. H.

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1898.



ON  
DR. ARMSTRONG'S POEM  
ON THE  
*ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.*

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THE Poems termed *didactic* may be considered as of two kinds. Those to which the term is more properly applied, are such as directly profess to teach some art or science. The other species consists of those which, taking up some speculative topic, establish a theory concerning it by argument and illustration. Of the former kind many will familiarly occur to the reader's memory; and the piece before us is an example of it. Of the latter are various philosophical and argumentative pieces, from the poem of LUCRETIVS on the Epicurean system, to POPE'S Essay on Man, and AKENSIDE'S Pleasures of the Imagination. A middle place between the two seems to be occupied by moral poetry, which, at the same time that it lays down practical rules for the conduct of life, discusses the theoretical principles on which they are founded.

Now, in estimating the respective value of these different products of the poetic art, it will be necessary to begin with considering what poetry essentially is, and what are its powers and purposes. It is, I conceive, essential to poetry that it should present ideas to the imagination, either agreeable of themselves, or rendered so by the clothing and accompaniments given to them. Its leading aim is to please; and its powers are, to a certain degree, to make pleasing what would not be so of itself. If, therefore, by the poet's art, to the main end of giving pleasure can be associated that of communicating instruction in such a way as will more strongly and agreeably impress it on the mind, its complete purpose may be said to be attained. Delight and profit combined are all that can be wished from the noblest of the fine arts.

But there are subjects the nature of which renders such a combination scarcely possible, and in which every attempt to produce it, can only yield an incongruous mixture of ill-placed ornament and defective instruction. These are especially to be found in those arts of life which depend upon the application of mechanical rules, or the practical skill acquired by experience. To describe the minute processes of manual art in verse, in such a manner as that they shall be understood, is not only a very difficult task, but a wholly fruitless one; since, after all, the description cannot be so clear and precise as one written in prose, nor can the verse rise to poetry. We may, indeed, admire the skill shewn in the attempt to decorate a



barren subject, but we must regret that the writer's talents were so ill employed. So obvious is this conclusion that we may be assured no one ever wrote a didactic poem for the simple purpose of teaching an art. The choice has therefore been dictated by a search after novelty, or the desire of exhibiting a proof of poetical skill. These motives are expressly avowed by VIRGIL in his *Georgics*, and are much more probable than the deep political design attributed to that poem, of exciting the Roman nobility to the pursuits of agriculture.

But while perhaps *every* poem strictly didactic labours under the inconvenience of a subject not calculated for displaying the art of poetry in its fairest form, some, both from their nature, and from the manner of treating them, are less defective in this respect than others. Thus, certain arts are closely connected in their theory with large and philosophical views of the system of the universe, or of the principles of the human mind. Some, even in their practice, afford matter for pleasing description, and admit of easy illustration from the most striking and agreeable objects of external nature. For example, the arts of husbandry are evidently allied to a vast variety of great and interesting topics; and we all know how advantageously VIRGIL has employed them as the ground-work of one of the most pleasing poems of antiquity. This piece, however, will also serve to shew the unfavourable effect of attempting to express matter purely technical in a poetical manner. For no unprejudiced reader will deny, that in

many of the preceptive passages, notwithstanding the variety of resources he employs to elevate them into poetry, he is overpowered by his subject, and chained, as it were, to the earth he is labouring ; while, on the other hand, as a teacher of the art, he is frequently so obscure, as to have embarrassed the whole race of agricultural and literary critics since his time. It may also be observed, that had he extended his views further into the philosophical part of his subject, and made a full use of the moral and physical variety it was capable of affording, he would not have found it necessary to wander into digressions so remotely connected with his proposed topics, as scarcely to be justified by any reasonable claim of poetic licence. For even the semblance of teaching is destroyed by deviations, the manifest purpose of which is to disengage the reader's attention from the main subject, and fix it upon somewhat more captivating to the imagination.

With respect to the Piece before us, its subject seems on the whole as happily calculated for didactic poetry, as most of those which have been taken for the purpose. To say that it is a peculiarly proper one for a physician to write upon, is saying nothing of consequence to the reader. But the preservation of health is, in the first place, a matter of general importance, and therefore interesting to readers of every class. Then, although its rules, scientifically considered, belong to a particular profession, and require previous studies for their full comprehension, yet in the popular use, they are level to the under-

standing and experience of every man of reading and reflection. Had the subject been more strictly medical, such as the nature and cure of a particular disease, it would have been liable to the objections attending a confined and professional topic ; and, like the *Siphylis* of FRACASTORIUS, could scarcely, by the greatest poetical skill, have been rendered generally pleasing or instructive. But every man being in some measure entrusted with the care of his own health, and being accustomed to speculations concerning Air, Diet, Exercise, and the Passions, the subject may be considered as universal. It is true, these topics can be poetically treated only in a popular manner, and the writer who chooses the vehicle of verse in treating of them, must take up with common and perhaps superficial notions. But by associating these notions with images addressed to the imagination, he may convey them in a more agreeable form ; and he may advantageously employ the diction of poetry to give to practical rules an energy and conciseness of expression which may forcibly imprint them on the memory. This power is, indeed, the principal circumstance which imparts real utility to didactic poetry ; and we all feel its effects on becoming acquainted with the moral and critical works of such authors as HORACE, BOILEAU and POPE. Further, the topics with which the Art of Health is conversant, are connected with various of the loftiest and most extensive speculations on general nature ; and, in pursuing the regular vein of thought, many sources of truly poetical ideas may be opened. It remains now to examine how far the author has avail-

ed himself of the advantages of his subject, and in what manner he has supported the character of a didactic poet.

As Invocation is an established part of a regular poem, it was necessary that the piece before us should be provided with that decoration. The choice of *HYGEIA*, or the goddess of Health, for the object of address, was dictated by a very obvious propriety. The manner is imitated from that of *LUCRETIVS* in his fine invocation to *Venus*; and much imagination is displayed in the description of her approach, and of the various baleful forms of disease and death that fly from her presence.

Of the sources from which health is drawn, salubrious air is one of the most remarkable. Air, therefore, with propriety, is made the peculiar topic of the first book. Perhaps a descriptive passage of more strength can scarcely be met with than that which enumerates the various contaminations of this element in a crowded city. The ideas, indeed, in their own nature disgusting, might be thought almost too vividly represented, did they not by contrast add to the sweetness of the subsequent rural picture, the effect of which is almost equal to that of the fabled calenture in calling forth irresistible longings after the country. Every reader familiar with the vicinity of the metropolis will feel peculiar pleasure from the glimpses given of those favourite summer retreats, Windsor, Richmond, Dulwich, and Harpstead, which will excite in his mind particular images, al-

ways much more engaging to the fancy than general ones. The poet next exercises his invention in one of the higher efforts of the art, that of allegorical personification. His figure and genealogy of *Quartana*, are well imagined; but like most of those who create these fancy-formed beings, he fails in the *agency* he attributes to her; for in merely inspiring a fit of the ague, she acts not as a person, but as an incorporeal cause.

He goes on to describe the different sites unfriendly to health, particularly the too moist and the too dry, which he makes the foundation of what are called in the schools of physic the phlegmatic and melancholic temperaments. In his instructions how to guard against the evils of different situations, he somewhat anticipates his future topics of diet and exercise. The passage, however, is full of vigorous description; and the means of correcting the watery and the parched soil, afford spirited sketches of landscape. But he is no where so minute, as in that perpetual topic of an Englishman, the bad weather under which our island is so frequently submerged. A kind of splenetic strength of painting distinguishes his gloomy draught of loaded skies and eastern blasts, and of that vexatious fickleness of weather, in which all the seasons seem to "mix in every monstrous day."

We are, however, brought into good humour again by the description of cheerful, dry, and sheltered spots in which atmospherical evils may be palliated; and the concluding eulogy on the cheering and invigorat-

ing influence of solar heat, leaves the fancy agreeably impressed with a sensation similar to that imparted by a serene summer's day. On the whole, the descriptive beauties of this book are considerable; but as a leading head of his subject, it might, I conceive, have been lengthened with advantage, by some circumstances relative to the influence of air upon health, which he has not touched upon. The sudden operation upon the spirits by alterations in the weight of the atmosphere, as indicated by the barometer, and the medicinal effects of change of climate upon invalids, would have afforded matter both for curious discussion, and interesting, and even pathetic, narration.

*Diet*, the subject of the second book, is, as the writer observes on entering upon it, comparatively barren and unfavourable to poetry. It is evidently more immersed in technical investigations than the former; and its connection with the grossest of the sensual pleasures, renders it difficult to be treated on without derogating from the dignity of a philosophical poem. Dr. ARMSTRONG, however, has managed it with judgment. He begins with a scientific topic, necessary as a foundation for the preceptive part which is to follow—the circulation of the blood. This function, however, admits of easy illustration from the common principles of hydraulics, as displayed in the motion of water through pipes and channels. The constant waste of solid particles that such a perpetual current must produce, demonstrates the necessity for a new supply by means of somewhat

taken in. Hence naturally follows the consideration of food, its concoction, and the choice of aliments, solid and fluid, suited to persons of different constitutions, and in different climates. This is the general plan of the book. The poet's skill consists in taking the subject out of the language and reasonings of science, familiarising it by apt illustration, and diversifying it by amusing digression. All this he has attempted, and with success.

We shall not closely follow his steps while he treats of the digestibility and salubriousness of different foods, and lays down rules for the regulation of appetite. The subject, as we before hinted, is not of the most pleasing kind, and it is apparently rather from necessity than choice that he enters into it. His expressions and images are strong, but strength so employed is unavoidably a-kin to coarseness. A more agreeable topic is the praise of temperance and simple diet, from which he easily slides into a beautiful moral passage, shewing how much better riches may be employed than in the luxuries of the table—by relieving indigence and unfriended merit. One line is almost unrivalled in pathetic energy.

Tho' hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.

The opposite evils arising from too full and too scanty a diet are next enumerated, and cautions are given respecting the progress from one to the other. The different regimen proper for the several seasons of the year is then touched upon; and this naturally



leads the poet to open a new source of variety in description, derived from a view of human life as subsisting in climates removed to the two extremes from our own. The picture of the frigid zone is but slightly sketched ; that of the torrid regions is much more minute, and will strongly remind the reader of a similar one by the hand of THOMPSON ; but I dare not assert that it will lose nothing by the comparison. It is rendered less appropriate, by the enumeration of vegetable articles which in reality belong to very different climates ; the cocoa and anana being many degrees separated from the countries rich in corn and wine. The cedar of Lebanon, likewise, as a native of the bleak tops of high mountains, ought not to be placed by the side of the palm and plaitain.

The succeeding passage, however, which paints the wonders of the Naiad kingdom, though it also has its parallel in the *Seasons*, is not, I think, surpassed by that, or any other poem, in strength and grandeur of description. The awful sublimity of the scenes themselves, and the artifice of the poet in introducing himself as a spectator, and marking the supposed impressions on his own mind, elevate this piece to the very summit of descriptive poetry.

The praise of water-drinking follows ; with the precepts of the father of physic for choosing rightly this pure and innocent beverage. Notwithstanding the apparent earnestness with which the poet dwells on this topic, there is some reason to suspect that he was not quite hearty in the cause. For he not only



adopts the notion of those who have recommended an occasional debauch as a salutary spur to nature ; but, descanting on the necessity a man may find himself under to practise hard drinking in order to promote the pursuits of ambition and avarice, he advises him (between jest and earnest) to enure himself to the trial by slow degrees. Here the physician and sage seem lost in the jolly companion. He soon, however, resumes those characters ; and after remarking the tendency of a continued use of wine to bring on premature old age, he digresses into a theoretical account of the process by which the animal machine is gradually impeded in its motions, and at length comes to a full stop. This conducts him to a striking termination of the book, in a lofty description of the ravages made by time upon the works of human art, and the world itself.

*Exercise*, the subject of the third book, is a theme more adapted to poetry, and less immersed in professional disquisitions, than that of the preceding. Its benefits in the preservation of health are universally known ; and the poet's task is rather to frame upon it pictures agreeable to the imagination, than to treat of it in a closely preceptive or scientific manner. Dr. ARMSTRONG begins with a lively portrait of the rustic, rendered firm and robust by toil, like a sturdy oak of the forest ; and he produces him as a specimen of the influence of exercise on the human frame. He then exhorts the votary of health to partake of the various kinds of rural pastime, the walk in all seasons, the chase, and the sport of fishing. This last

amusement introduces a very pleasing passage, in which the poet characterises various streams, particularly the Liddel, on whose pastoral banks he first drew breath. The tribute of affection he pays to his native place, and the retrospect of his own boyish years, are sweetly interesting, and vie with all that THOMPSON and SMOLLET have written on a similar topic.

The species of exercise afforded by gardening, gives occasion to a moral picture, of a man retired from public life to the cultivation of his estate, surrounded with a select society of old companions of the same tastes and pursuits with himself. This is wrought so much in the manner of THOMPSON, that, were it not for some difference of style, it might pass undistinguished as a passage of the Seasons. The “*noctes cœnæque deum*” of HORACE, have contributed to adorn the piece.

Resuming the medical consideration of exercise, he next adverts to its power in strengthening weak parts by habitual exertions; and he dwells on the propriety of a gradual progress from rest to labour, and on the mischiefs attending too violent and heedless toils. This leads him to a serious and pathetic apostrophe on the fatal effects proceeding from exposure to cold, or draughts of cold liquor, when heated, which he represents as the most frequent of all causes of mortal disease. The ancient use of warm baths, and unctions after exercise is his next topic, in speaking of which, he finds it necessary to touch upon

that important function of the body, insensible perspiration. The strict connexion of this with health and disease, according as it is regular or deranged, has been a favourite argument with certain medical schools, and is here briefly illustrated in poetical language. The use of cold bathing in steeling the frame against the inclemencies of a cold climate, and the advantages of frequent ablution in hot ones, and of cleanliness in all, are further subjects of digression.

He returns to the consideration of exercise, as it is limited by recurring changes of the day and year ; warning against it while the body is loaded with food, and during the heats of a summer's noon, and the chills of evening. These preceptive remarks lead him to a vein more fertile of ideas addressed to the imagination ; for, conceiving the day to be sunk into the silence and gloom of midnight, he views the toil-spent hind, wrapt in the arms of profound repose, the sweet soother of his labours. Hence he digresses to the subject of dreams, and paints in vivid colours the horrid scenes that disturb the mind during the delirium of unquiet slumber. The proper period in which sleep is to be indulged, with its due measure to different constitutions, are next considered. The influence of habit in this respect, brings on an exhortation to proceed very gradually in altering every corporeal habit ; and this is made an introduction to a description of the successive changes of the year, with the distempers they bring. All this, and the remainder of the book, might perhaps with greater propriety have made a part of the first head ; since

its connection with exercise is less obvious than with air. To introduce in some part of his plan an account of epidemic diseases was, however, evidently proper, both as matter of important instruction respecting the preservation of health, and as affording scope for poetical variety. After some common observations on the diseases of Spring and Autumn, and the means of guarding against them, with a forcible injunction against delay as soon as symptoms of danger appear; the poet proceeds to an imitation of VIRGIL and LUCRÆTIUS in the particular description of a pestilence; and he very happily chooses for his subject the Sweating-Sickness, which prevailed first in England when the Earl of RICHMOND, afterwards HENRY VII. came hither on his expedition against the tyrant RICHARD. So many graphical descriptions in prose and verse have been made of visitations of this kind, that scarcely any source of novelty remained in the *general* circumstances accompanying them. Dr. ARMSTRONG has therefore judiciously introduced as much as possible of the *particular* character of this singular distemper, which, as far as we learn, was entirely unknown before, and has never appeared since that period. He has not even rejected certain popular errors prevalent respecting it, which, though they ought carefully to be avoided, in a medical treatise, may perhaps be permitted to enhance the wonder of a poetical narration. Such is that, which asserts Englishmen to have been its only victims, both in their own country and abroad—a notion which certainly adds to the interest with which a native of this country reads the relation;

The conclusion of this book is a close copy from VIRGIL in the design, suitably varied in the circumstances. The deaths beyond the Atlantic allude to the unfortunate expedition to Carthageria, a popular topic of complaint at that period.

The title with which the fourth and last book is inscribed, is *the Passions* ; but its subject would be more accurately expressed by the influence of the mind over the body—a large and elevated topic, detached from the technical matter of any particular profession, and in its full extent comprising every thing sublime and affecting in moral poetry. The theory of the union of a spiritual principle with the gross corporeal substance, is that which the writer adopts as the basis of his reasonings. It is this ruling power which

Wields at his will the dull material world,  
And is the body's health or malady.

He evidently confounds, however, (as all writers on this system do) matter of great subtilty, with what is not matter—or spirit. These “viewless atoms,” he says, “are lost in thinking,” yet thought itself is not the enemy of life, but painful thinking, such as that proceeding from anxious studies and fretful emotions. To prevent the baneful effects of these, he counsels us frequently to vary our objects, and to join the bodily exercise of reading aloud, to the mental labour of meditation. Solitary brooding over thoughts of a particular kind, such, especially, as pride or fear presents to the imagination, is warned against, in a

passage full of energy, as the usual parent of madness and melancholy. Sometimes what the poet terms a *chronic passion*, or one arising from a misfortune which has made a lasting impression, such as the loss of a beloved friend, produces a sympathetic languor in the body, which can only be removed by shifting the scene, and plunging in amusement or business. Some persons, however, take a less innocent method of dispelling grief,

\_\_\_\_\_ and in the tempting bowl  
Of poison'd nectar, sweet oblivion swill.

The immediately exhilarating effects, and the sad subsequent reverse attending this baneful practice, are here painted in the most vivid colouring, and form a highly instructive and pathetic lesson. Particularly, the gradual degradation of character which it infallibly brings, is finely touched.

A kind of moral lecture succeeds, introduced as the supposed precepts of a sage in human life, whose character is represented as a compound of manly sense and cheerfulness. How to acquire happiness by moderation in the pursuit of pleasure, and by the practice of virtue, is the topic of this passage, which, though certainly digressive, has, however, a natural affinity with the leading subject of the book. Virtue has seldom been characterized with more spirit and dignity; and trite as the sentiments are, the energy with which they are expressed commands attention.

The poet next reverts to his more direct purpose,



that of considering the passions in their influence upon bodily health. In general, he lays it down as a rule, that all emotions which are pleasing to the mind, are also salutary to the body. But there are exceptions, some being prone in their nature to hurtful excess; as an instance of which he gives the passion of Love. Here, again, he tries his strength with THOMPSON, and his description cannot but remind the reader of that fine picture of a love-sick youth, drawn by this writer in his Spring. THOMPSON, however, dwells much more minutely on the mental effects of love. ARMSTRONG, with propriety, fixes the attention more on the changes it induces in the corporeal frame, and this, both as it is a passion, and as it leads to sensual indulgences. With great force, yet with sufficient delicacy, he paints the condition of one unnerved and exhausted by excess in amorous delights. This, indeed, is deviating from the express purpose of the book; since love as a passion, and the appetite for sexual enjoyment, are distinct things, the latter being certainly able to subsist without the former, if not the former without the latter. But an insensible gradation led him easily from the one to the other.

The passion of Anger is his next theme, and the bold personification with which he has introduced it, is admirably suited to its violent and precipitate character. A fit of rage has frequently been known at once to overpower the vital faculties, and strike with instant death. To guard against it was therefore a point of peculiar importance? and the poet has pre-

sented many striking moral arguments against the indulgence of that habit which makes us prone to ungoverned fallies of this passion. But where reason proves too weak for the controul of this and other unruly affections of the mind, to what other power shall we resort for aid? We may, (he hints) oppose passion to passion, and extinguish one by its opposite. But without dwelling on this contrivance (which, indeed, is neither very philosophical nor manageable) he proceeds to recognize a power in Nature, which may be rendered the universal tranquillizer of the breast; and this power is Music. With a contrasted description of the music which exercises this sympathetic dominion over the emotions, and that which is only the execution of difficult trifles, followed by an allusion to the fabulous stories of some ancient masters, and the praise of the art itself, the poet, somewhat abruptly, closes the book and the work.

From this cursory view of the contents of Dr. ARMSTRONG'S piece, it will probably appear, that together with a sufficient variety for the purpose of amusement, there is uniformity of design enough to constitute the proper character of a didactic poem. Almost every thing essential to the preservation of health is touched upon during its course; and the digressive parts are neither wholly impertinent to the main object, nor do they occupy a disproportionate space. Many topics of an elevated nature are occasionally introduced; and moral sentiment is agreeably interwoven with precept and description. The writer has, apparently, found some difficulty in ad-



hering to the arrangement of his design ; for neither are the proposed topics of the four books equally copious of matter, nor has he with precision confined himself to the subjects belonging to each. However, as the *real* intention of such a work is not to afford systematic instruction, but to impress the mind with detached particulars, and to amuse it with variety, objections in point of method are little to be regarded. If this performance on the whole offers a fund of useful advice and rational entertainment to every cultivated reader, and at the same time is in a good degree what it professes to be, it has fulfilled its purpose.

It now remains to consider how far this work is characterised by any peculiarity of style and manner.

English blank verse in its structure approaches so nearly to prose, that they who have employed it on elevated subjects have adopted a variety of methods to give it the stamp of poetry. Some have transplanted as much as possible of the idiom of the ancient languages into their own. They have used words in uncommon senses, derived rather from etymology than practice ; and in the formation of sentences, they have studiously deviated from the natural order, and copied the involutions and inversions of the Latin and Greek. Others have enriched their style with novel terms and compound epithets, and have aimed at an uncommon mode of saying the commonest things. Very different from these is the manner of ARMSTRONG. It is distinguished by its simplicity—by a free use of words which owe their

strength to their plainness—by the rejection of ambitious ornaments; and a near approach to common-phrasology. His sentences are generally short and easy, his sense clear and obvious. The full extent of his conceptions is taken at the first glance; and there are no lofty mysteries to be unravelled by repeated perusal. What keeps his language from being prosaic, is the vigour of his sentiments: He thinks boldly, feels strongly, and therefore expresses himself poetically. Where the subject sinks, his style sinks with it; but he has for the most part excluded topics incapable either of vivid description, or of the oratory of sentiment. He had from nature a musical ear, whence his lines, scarcely ever harsh, are usually melodious, though apparently without much study to render them so. Perhaps he has not been careful enough to avoid the monotony of making several successive lines close with a rest or pause in the sense. On the whole, it may not be too much to assert, that no writer in blank verse can be found more free from stiffness and affectation, more energetic without harshness, and more dignified without formality.

THE  
FIRST BOOK  
OF THE  
*ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.*

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AIR.



THE  
A R T  
OF  
PRESERVING HEALTH.

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BOOK I.

AIR.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of every joy,  
HYGEIA ;\* whose indulgent smile sustains  
The various race luxuriant nature pours,  
And on th' immortal essences bestows  
Immortal youth ; auspicious, O descend !  
Thou cheerful guardian of the rolling year,  
Whether thou wanton'st on the western gale,  
Or shak'st the rigid pinions of the north,  
Diffusest life and vigour through the tracts  
Of air, thro' earth, and ocean's deep domain.

*\* Hygeia, the Goddess of Health, was, according to the genealogy of the heathen deities, the daughter of Esculapius ; who, as well as Apollo, was distinguished by the name of Pæon.*

When thro' the blue serenity of heaven  
 Thy power approaches, all the wasteful host  
 Of pain and sickness, squalid and deform'd,  
 Confounded sink into the loathsome gloom,  
 Where in deep Erebus involv'd, the fiends  
 Grow more profane. Whatever shapes of death,  
 Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,  
 Swarm thro' the shudd'ring air : whatever plagues  
 Or meagre famine breeds, or with slow wings  
 Rise from the putrid watery element,  
 The damp waste forest, motionless and rank,  
 That smothers earth and all the breathless winds,  
 Or the vile carnage of the inhuman field ;  
 Whatever baneful breaths the rotten South ;  
 Whatever ills the extremes or sudden change  
 Of cold and hot, or moist and dry produce ;  
 They fly thy pure effulgence : they, and all  
 The secret poisons of avenging heaven,  
 And all the pale tribes halting in the train  
 Of Vice and heedless Pleasure : or if aught  
 The comet's glare amid the burning sky,  
 Mournful eclipse, or planets ill combin'd,  
 Portend disastrous to the vital world ;  
 Thy salutary power averts their rage,  
 Averts the general bane ; and but for thee  
 Nature would sicken, nature soon would die.

Without thy cheerful active energy,  
 No rapture swells the breast, no poet sings,  
 No more the maids of Helicon delight.  
 Come then with me, O Goddess heavenly gay !  
 Begin the song ; and let it sweetly flow,

And let it sweetly teach thy wholesome laws :  
 “ How best the fickle fabric to support  
 “ Of mortal man ; in healthful body how  
 “ A healthful mind the longest to maintain.”  
 ’Tis hard, in such a strife of rules, to choose  
 The best, and those of most extensive use ;  
 Harder in clear and animated song  
 Dry philosophic precepts to convey.  
 Yet with thy aid the secret wilds I trace  
 Of nature, and with daring steps proceed  
 Thro’ paths the muses never trod before.

Nor should I wander doubtful of my way,  
 Had I the lights of that sagacious mind  
 Which taught to check the pestilential fire,  
 And quell the deadly Python of the Nile.  
 O thou, belov’d by all the graceful arts,  
 ’Thou long the fav’rite of the healing powers,  
 Indulge, O MEAD ! a well-design’d essay,  
 Howe’er imperfect : and permit that I  
 My little knowledge with my country share,  
 Till you the rich Asclepian stores unlock,  
 And with new graces dignify the theme.

YE who amid this sev’rish world would wear  
 A body free of pain, of cares a mind ;  
 Fly the rank city, shun it’s turbid air ;  
 Breathe not the chaos of eternal smoke  
 And volatile corruption, from the dead,  
 The dying, sick’ning, and the living world  
 Exhal’d, to fully heaven’s transparent dome  
 With dim mortality. It is not air

That from a thousand lungs reeks back to thine,  
Sated with exhalations rank and fell,  
The spoils of dunghills and the putrid thaw  
Of nature ; when from shape and texture she  
Relaxes into fighting elements :  
It is not air, but floats a nauseous mass  
Of all obscene, corrupt, offensive things.  
Much moisture hurts : but here a sordid bath,  
With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more  
The solid frame than simple moisture can.  
Besides, immur'd in many a fullen bay  
That never felt the freshness of the breeze,  
'This slumb'ring Deep remains, and ranker grows  
With sickly rest : and (tho' the lungs abhor  
'To drink the dun fuliginous abyss)  
Did not the acid vigour of the mine,  
Roll'd from so many thund'ring chimneys, tame  
The putrid streams that over swarm the sky ;  
This caustic venom would perhaps corrode  
Those tender cells that draw the vital air,  
In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd ;  
Or by the drunken venous tubes, that yawn  
In countless pores o'er all the pervious skin  
Imbib'd, would poison the balsamic blood,  
And rouse the heart to every fever's rage.  
While yet you breathe, away ; the rural wilds  
Invite ; the mountains call you, and the vales ;  
'The woods, the streams, and each ambrosial breeze  
That fans the ever undulating sky ;  
A kindly sky, whose soft'ring pow'r regales  
Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.  
Find then some woodland scene where nature smiles



Benign, where all her honest children thrive.  
 To us there wants not many a happy seat :  
 Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise  
 We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.  
 See where enthron'd in adamantine state,  
 Proud of her bards, imperial Windsor sits ;  
 'There choose thy seat in some aspiring grove,  
 Fast by the slowly-winding Thames ; or where  
 Broader she laves fair Richmond's green retreats,  
 (Richmond that sees an hundred villas rise  
 Rural or gay.) O ! from the summer's rage,  
 O ! wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides  
 Umbrageous Ham !—But if the busy town  
 Attract thee still to toil for power or gold,  
 Sweetly thou may'st thy vacant hours possess  
 In Hampstead, courted by the western wind ;  
 Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood ;  
 Or lose the world amid the sylvan wilds  
 Of Dulwich, yet by barb'rous arts unspoil'd.  
 Green rise the Kentish hills in cheerful air ;  
 But on the marshy plains that Essex spreads  
 Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet:  
 For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,  
 With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,  
 Quartana there presides : a meagre fiend  
 Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force  
 Compress'd the slothful Naiad of the Fens.  
 From such a mixture sprung, this fitful pest  
 With fev'rish blasts subdues the sick'ning land :  
 Cold tremors come, with mighty love of rest,  
 Convulsive yawnings, lassitude and pains  
 That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins,

And rack the joints and every torpid limb ;  
Then parching heat succeeds, till copious sweats  
O'erflow ; a short relief from former ills.  
Beneath repeated shocks the wretches pine ;  
The vigour sinks, the habit melts away ;  
The cheerful, pure, and animated bloom  
Dies from the face, with squalid atrophy  
Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad.  
And oft the Sorceress, in her fated wrath,  
Requies them to the furies of her train ;  
The bloated Hydrops, and the yellow fiend  
Ting'd with her own accumulated gall.

In quest of sites, avoid the mournful plain  
Where osiers thrive, and trees that love the lake ;  
Where many lazy muddy rivers flow :  
Nor for the wealth that all the Indies roll  
Fix near the marshy margin of the main.  
For from the humid soil and wat'ry reign  
Eternal vapours rise ; the spongy air  
Forever weeps ; or turgid with the weight  
Of waters, pours a sounding deluge down.  
Skies such as these let ev'ry mortal shun  
Who dreads the dropsy, palsy, or the gout,  
Tertian, corrosive scurvy, or the moist catarrh  
Or any other injury that grows  
From raw-spun fibres, idle and unstrung,  
Skin ill-perspiring, and the purple flood  
In languid eddies loit'ring into phlegm.

Yet not alone from humid skies we pine ;  
For air may be too dry. The subtile heaven,

That winnows into dust the blasted downs,  
 Bare and extended wide without a stream,  
 Too fast imbibes th' attenuated lymph  
 Which, by the surface, from the blood exhales.  
 The lungs grow rigid, and with toil essay  
 Their flexible vibrations ; or inflam'd,  
 Their tender, ever-moving structure thaws.  
 Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle, the blood  
 A mass of lees remains, a drossy tide  
 That flow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins ;  
 Unactive in the services of life,  
 Unfit to lead its pitchy current through  
 The secret mazy channels of the brain.  
 The melancholic Fiend (that worst despair  
 Of physic,) hence the rust complexion'd man  
 Pursues, whose blood is dry, whose fibres gain  
 Too stretch'd a tone : and hence in climes adust  
 So sudden tumults seize the trembling nerves,  
 And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly, if you can, these violent extremes  
 Of Air ; the wholesome is nor moist nor dry.  
 But as the power of choosing is deny'd  
 To half mankind, a farther task ensues ;  
 How best to mitigate these fell extremes,  
 How breathe unhurt the with'ring element,  
 Or hazy atmosphere : though Custom moulds  
 To ev'ry clime the soft Promethean clay ;  
 And he who first the fogs of Essex breath'd  
 (So kind is native air) may in the fens  
 Of Essex from the inveterate ills revive  
 At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.

But if the raw and oozy heaven offend;  
Correct the foil, and dry the sources up  
Of wat'ry exhalation ; wide and deep  
Conduct your trenches thro' the quaking bog ;  
Solicitous, with all your winding arts,  
Betray th' unwilling lake into the stream ;  
And weed the forest, and invoke the winds  
To break the toils where strangled vapours lie ;  
Or thro' the thickets send the crackling flames.  
Mean time at home with cheerful fire dispel  
The humid air : and let your table smoke  
With solid roast or bak'd ; or what the herds  
Of tamer breed supply ; or what the wilds  
Yield to the toilsome pleasures of the chase.  
Generous your wine, the boast of rip'ning years,  
But frugal be your cups : the languid frame,  
Vapid and sunk from yesterday's debauch,  
Shrinks from the cold embrace of wat'ry heaven.  
But neither these nor all Apollo's arts,  
Disarm the dangers of the dropping sky,  
Unless with exercise and manly toil  
You brace your nerves, and spur the lagging blood.  
The fat'ning clime let all the sons of ease  
Avoid ; if indolence would wish to live,  
Go, yawn and loiter out the long, slow year  
In fairy skies. If droughty regions parch  
The skin and lungs, and bake the thick'ning blood ;  
Deep in the waving forest choose your seat  
Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty air ;  
And wake the fountains from their secret beds,  
And into lakes dilate the rapid stream.  
Here spread your gardens wide ; and let the cool,

The moist relaxing vegetable store,  
Prevail in each repast : Your food supplied  
By bleeding life, be gently wasted down,  
By soft decoction and a mellowing heat,  
To liquid balm ; or, if the solid mass  
You choose, tormented in the boiling wave ;  
That thro' the thirsty channels of the blood  
A smooth diluted chyle may ever flow.  
The fragrant dairy from the cool recess  
Its nectar acid or benign will pour  
To drown your thirst ; or let the mantling bowl  
Of keen Sherbet the fickle taste relieve.  
For with the viscous blood the simple stream  
Will hardly mingle ; and fermented cups  
Oft dissipate more moisture than they give.  
Yet when pale seasons rise, or winter rolls  
His horrors o'er the world, thou may'st indulge  
In feasts more genial, and impatient broach  
The mellow cask. Then too the scourging air  
Provokes to keener toils than sultry droughts  
Allow. But rarely we such skies blaspheme.  
Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs  
Bedew'd, our seasons droop : incumbent still  
A pond'rous heaven o'erwhelms the sinking soul.  
Lab'ring with storms in heapy mountains rise  
Th' imbattled clouds, as if the Stygian shades  
Had left the dungeon of eternal night.  
Till black with thunder all the south descends.  
Scarce in a showerless day the heav'ns indulge  
Our melting clime ; except the baleful east  
Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks  
The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk

Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene.  
 Good heaven ! for what unexpiated crimes  
 This dismal change ! The brooding elements  
 Do they, your powerful ministers of wrath,  
 Prepare some fierce exterminating plague ?  
 Or is it fix'd in the decrees above  
 That lofty Albion melt into the main ?  
 Indulgent nature ! O dissolve this gloom ;  
 Bind in eternal adamant the winds  
 That drown or wither : Give the genial west  
 To breathe, and in its turn the sprightly north :  
 And may once more the circling seasons rule  
 The year ; not mix in every monstrous day.

Meantime the moist malignity to shun  
 Of burthen'd skies ; mark where the dry champagne  
 Swells into cheerful hills ; where Marjoram  
 And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air ;  
 And where the Cynorrhodon\* with the rose  
 For fragrance vies ; for in the thirsty soil  
 Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes.  
 There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep  
 Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires.  
 And let them see the winter morn arise,  
 The summer ev'ning blushing in the west ;  
 While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind  
 O'erhung, defends you from the blust'ring north,  
 And bleak affliction of the peevish east.  
 O ! when the growling winds contend, and all

\* *The wild rose, or that which grows on the common  
 briar.*

The founding forest fluctuates in the storm ;  
To sink in warm repose, and hear the din  
Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights  
Above the luxury of common sleep.  
The murmuring riv'let, and the hoarser strain  
Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,  
Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest.  
To please the fancy is no trifling good,  
Where health is studied ; for whatever moves  
The mind with calm delight, promotes the just  
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.  
Besides, the sportive brook forever shakes  
The trembling air ; that floats from hill to hill,  
From vale to mountain, with incessant change  
Of purest element, refreshing still  
Your airy seat, and uninfected Gods.  
Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds  
High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides  
Th' etherial deep with endless billows chafes.  
His purer mansion nor contagious years  
Shall reach, nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

But may no fogs, from lake or fenny plain,  
Involve my hill ! And wheresoe'er you build,  
Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains  
Wash'd by the silent Lee ; in Chelsea low,  
Or high Blackheath with wintry winds assail'd ;  
Dry be your house : but airy more than warm.  
Else every breath of ruder wind will strike  
Your tender body thro' with rapid pains ;  
Fierce coughs will teize you, hoarseness bind your voice,  
Or moist Gravedo load your aching brows.

These to defy, and all the fates that dwell  
In cloister'd air, tainted with streaming life,  
Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms;  
And still at azure noontide may your dome  
At every window drink the liquid sky.

Need we the sunny situation here,  
And theatres open to the south, commend?  
Here, where the morning's misty breath infests  
More than the torrid noon? How sickly grow,  
How pale, the plants in those ill-fated vales  
That, circled round with the gigantic heap  
Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hope  
To feel, the genial vigour of the sun!  
While on the neighb'ring hill the rose inflames  
The verdant spring; in verdant beauty blows  
The tender lilly, languishingly sweet;  
O'er every hedge the wanton woodbine roves,  
And autumn ripens in the summer's ray.  
Nor less the warmer living tribes demand  
The soft'ring sun; whose energy divine  
Dwells not in mortal fire; whose gen'rous heat  
Glows thro' the mass of grosser elements,  
And kindles into life the ponderous spheres.  
Cheer'd by thy kind, invigorating warmth,  
We court thy beams, great majesty of day!  
If not the soul, the regent of this world,  
First-born of heaven, and only less than God!



THE  
SECOND BOOK  
OF THE  
*ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.*

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DIET.



THE  
A R T  
OF  
PRESERVING HEALTH.

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BOOK II.

*DIET.*

ENOUGH of Air. A desert subject now,  
Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight,  
A barren waste, where not a garland grows  
To bind the Muse's brow; not e'en a proud,  
Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath,  
To rouse a noble horror in the soul:  
But rugged paths fatigue, and error leads  
Thro' endless labyrinths the devious feet.  
Farewel, ethereal fields! the humbler arts  
Of life; the table of the homely Gods  
Demand my song: Elysian gales, adieu!

The blood, the fountain whence the spirits flow,  
The generous stream that waters every part,  
And motion, vigour, and warm life conveys

To every particle that moves or lives ;  
This vital fluid, through unnumber'd tubes  
Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again  
Refunded ; scourg'd for ever round and round ;  
Enrag'd with heat and toil, at last forgets  
Its balmy nature ; virulent and thin  
It grows ; and now, but that a thousand gates  
Are open to its flight, it would destroy  
The parts it cherish'd, and repair'd before.  
Besides, the flexible and tender tubes  
Melt in the mildest, most nectareous tide  
That ripening nature rolls ; as in the stream  
Its crumbling banks ; but what the vital force  
Of plastic fluids hourly batters down,  
That very force, those plastic particles  
Rebuild : so mutable the state of man !  
For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,  
Daily, with fresh materials, to repair  
This unavoidable expense of life,  
This necessary waste of flesh and blood.  
Hence the concoctive powers, with various art,  
Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle ;  
The chyle to blood ; the foamy purple tide  
To liquors, which, through finer arteries,  
To different parts their winding course pursue ;  
To try new changes, and new forms put on,  
Or for the public, or some private use.

Nothing so foreign but th' athletic hind  
Can labour into blood. The hungry meal  
Alone he fears, or aliments too thin ;  
By violent powers too easily subdued,

Too soon expell'd. His daily labour thaws,  
 To friendly chyle, the most rebellious mass  
 That salt can harden, or the smoke of years ;  
 Nor does his gorge the rancid bacon rue,  
 Nor that which Cestria sends, tenacious paste  
 Of solid milk. But ye of softer clay,  
 Infirm and delicate ; and ye who waste,  
 With pale and bloated sloth, the tedious day !  
 Avoid the stubborn aliment, avoid  
 The full repast ; and let sagacious age  
 Grow wiser, lesson'd by the dropping teeth.

Half subtiliz'd to chyle, the liquid food  
 Readiest obeys th' assimilating powers ;  
 And soon the tender vegetable mass  
 Relents ; and soon the young of those that tread  
 The steadfast earth, or cleave the green abyss,  
 Or pathless sky. And if the steer must fall,  
 In youth and sanguine vigour let him die ;  
 Nor stay till rigid age, or heavy ails,  
 Absolve him, ill requited, from the yoke.  
 Some with high forage, and luxuriant ease,  
 Indulge the veteran ox ; but wiser thou,  
 From the bald mountain or the barren downs,  
 Expect the flocks by frugal nature fed ;  
 A race of purer blood, with exercise  
 Resin'd and scanty fare ; for, old or young,  
 The stall'd are never healthy ; nor the cramm'd :  
 Not all the culinary arts can tame,  
 To wholesome food, the abominable growth  
 Of rest and gluttony ; the prudent taste  
 Rejects, like bane, such loathsome lusciousness.

The languid stomach curses e'en the pure  
Delicious fat, and all the race of oil ;  
For more the oily aliments relax  
Its feeble tone ; and with the eager lymph  
(Fond to incorporate with all it meets)  
Coyly they mix, and shun with slippery wiles  
The woo'd embrace. 'Th' irresoluble oil,  
So gentle late, and blandishing, in floods  
Of rancid bile o'erflows : what tumults hence,  
What horrors rise, were nauseous to relate.  
Choose leaner viands, ye whose jovial make  
Too fast the gummy nutriment imbibes :  
Choose sober meals ; and rouse to active life  
Your cumbrous clay, nor on th' enfeebling down,  
Irresolute, protract the morning hours.  
But let the man whose bones are thinly clad,  
With cheerful ease and succulent repast  
Improve his habit if he can ; for each  
Extreme departs from perfect sanity.

I could relate what table this demands,  
Or that complexion ; what the various powers  
Of various foods : but fifty years would roll,  
And fifty more, before the tale were done.  
Besides, there often lurks some nameless, strange,  
Peculiar thing ; nor on the skin display'd,  
Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen ;  
Which finds a poison in the food, that most  
The temperature affects. There are, whose blood  
Impetuous rages through the turgid veins,  
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind,  
Than the moist Melon, or pale Cucumber.

Of chilly nature, others fly the board  
Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal powers,  
For cooler, kinder sustenance implore.  
Some e'en the generous nutriment detest  
Which, in the shell, the sleeping embryo rears.  
Some, more unhappy still, repent the gifts  
Of pales ; soft, delicious, and benign :  
The balmy quintessence of every flower,  
And every grateful herb that decks the spring ;  
The soft'ring dew of tender sprouting life ;  
The best refection of declining age ;  
The kind restorative of those who lie  
Half dead, and panting, from the doubtful strife  
Of nature struggling in the grasp of death.  
'Try all the bounties of this fertile globe,  
There is not such a salutary food  
As suits with every stomach. But (except,  
Amid the mingled mass of fish and fowl,  
And boil'd and bak'd, you hesitate by which  
You sunk oppress'd, or whether not by all ; )  
Taught by experience soon you may discern  
What pleases, what offends. Avoid the cates  
That lull the sicken'd appetite too long ;  
Or heave with feverish flushings all the face,  
Burn in the palms, and parch the rough'ning tongue ;  
Or much diminish, or too much increase  
Th' expence, which nature's wise economy,  
Without or waste or avarice, maintains.  
Such cates abjur'd, let prowling hunger loose,  
And bid the curious palate roam at will ;  
They scarce can err amid the various stores  
That burst the teeming entrails of the world,

Led by sagacious taste, the ruthless king  
Of beasts on blood and slaughter only lives ;  
The tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,  
Would at the manger starve : of milder seeds  
The generous horse to herbage and to grain  
Confines his wish ; though fabling Greece resound  
The Thracian steeds with human carnage wild.  
Prompted by instinct's never-erring power,  
Each creature knows its proper aliment ;  
But man, th' inhabitant of every clime,  
With all the commoners of nature feeds.  
Directed, bounded, by this power within,  
Their cravings are well aim'd : voluptuous man  
Is by superior faculties misled ;  
Misled from pleasure e'en in quest of joy.  
Sated with nature's boons, what thousands seek,  
With dishes tortured from their native taste,  
And mad variety, to spur beyond  
Its wiser will the jaded appetite !  
Is this for pleasure ? Learn a juster taste ;  
And know that temperance is true luxury.  
Or is it pride ? Pursue some nobler aim.  
Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire ;  
And earn the fair esteem of honest men,  
Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,  
The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates.  
E'en modest want may bless your hand unseen,  
Though hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.  
Is there no virgin, grac'd with every charm  
But that which binds the mercenary vow ?  
No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom,  
Unfoster'd, sickens in the barren shade ?



No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,  
Or by a heart too generous and humane,  
Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,  
And sigh for wants more bitter than his own ?  
'There are, while human miseries abound,  
A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,  
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,  
Without one hour of sickness or disgust.

But other ills th' ambiguous feast pursue,  
Besides provoking the lascivious taste.  
Such various foods, tho' harmless each alone,  
Each other violate ; and oft we see  
What strife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane,  
From combinations of innoxious things.  
Th' unbounded taste I mean not to confine  
To hermit's diet, needlessly severe.  
But would you long the sweets of health enjoy,  
Or husband pleasure ; at one impious meal  
Exhaust not half the bounties of the year,  
Of every realm. It matters not meanwhile  
How much to-morrow differ from to-day ;  
So far indulge : 'tis fit, besides, that man,  
To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd.  
But stay the curious appetite, and taste  
With caution fruits you never tried before.  
For want of use the kindest aliment  
Sometimes offends ; while custom tames the rage  
Of poison to mild amity with life.

So heav'n has form'd us to the general taste  
Of all its gifts ; so custom has improv'd

This bent of nature ; that few simple foods,  
Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,  
But by excess offend. Beyond the sense  
Of light refection, at the genial board  
Indulge not often ; nor protract the feast  
To dull satiety ; till soft and slow  
A drowsy death creeps on, th' expansive soul  
Oppress'd, and smother'd the celestial fire.  
The stomach, urg'd beyond its active tone,  
Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdued  
The softest food : unfinished and deprav'd,  
The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns  
Its turbid fountain ; not by purer streams  
So to be clear'd, but foulness will remain.  
'Tis sparkling wine what ferment can exalt  
The unripen'd grape ? Or what mechanic skill  
From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold ?

Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund  
Of plagues ; but more immedicable ills  
Attend the lean extreme. For physic knows  
How to disburden the too tumid veins,  
Even how to ripen the half-labour'd blood :  
But to unlock the elemental tubes,  
Collaps'd and shrunk with long inanity,  
And with balsamic nutriment repair  
The dried and worn-out habit, were to bid  
Old age grow green, and wear a second spring ;  
Or the tall ash, long ravish'd from the soil,  
Through wither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew.  
When hunger calls, obey ; nor often wait  
Till hunger sharpen to corrosive pain :

For the keen appetite will feast beyond  
What nature well can bear ; and one extreme  
Ne'er without danger meets its own reverse.  
Too greedily th' exhausted veins absorb  
The recent chyle, and load enfeebled powers  
Oft to th' extinction of the vital flame.  
To the pale cities, by the firm-set siege,  
And famine, humbled, may this verse be borne ;  
And hear, ye hardiest sons that Albion breeds,  
Long toss'd and famish'd on the wintry main ;  
The war shook off, or hospitable shore  
Attain'd, with temperance bear the shock of joy ;  
Nor crown with festive rites th' auspicious day :  
Such feast might prove more fatal than the waves,  
Than war or famine. While the vital fire  
Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on ;  
But prudently foment the wandering spark  
With what the soonest feels its kindred touch :  
Be frugal e'en of that ; a little give  
At first ; that kindled, add a little more ;  
Till, by deliberate nourishing, the flame  
Reviv'd, with all its wonted vigour glows.

But though the two (the full and jejune)  
Extremes have each their vice ; it much avails  
Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow  
From this to that : So nature learns to bear  
Whatever chance or headlong appetite  
May bring. Besides a meagre day subdues  
The cruder clods by sloth or luxury  
Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.  
Sometimes a coy aversion to the feast

Comes on, while yet no blacker omen lours ;  
Then is a time to shun the tempting board,  
Were it your natal or your nuptial day.  
Perhaps a fast so seasonable starves  
The latent seeds of woe, which, rooted once,  
Might cost your labour. But the day return'd  
Of festal luxury, the wise indulge  
Most in the tender vegetable breed ;  
Then chiefly, when the summer beams inflame  
The brazen heavens ; or angry Sirius sheds  
A feverish taint through the still gulph of air.  
The moist cool viands then, and flowing cup  
From the fresh dairy-virgin's liberal hand,  
Will save your head from harm, tho' round the world  
The dreaded Caufos\* roll his wasteful fires.  
Pale humid Winter loves the generous board,  
The meal more copious. and a warmer fare ;  
And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer  
His quaking heart. The seasons which divide  
Th' empires of heat and cold ; by neither claim'd,  
Influenc'd by both, a middle regimen  
Impose. Thro' autumn's languishing domain  
Descending, nature by degrees invites  
To glowing luxury. But, from the depth  
Of winter when th' invigorated year  
Emerges ; when Favonius flush'd with love,  
Toysful and young, in every breeze descends  
More warm and wanton on his kindling bride ;  
Then, shepherds, then begin to spare your flocks ;  
And learn, with wise humanity, to check

\* *The burning fever.*

The lust of blood. Now pregnant earth commits  
A various offspring to th' indulgent sky ;  
Now bounteous nature feeds with lavish hand  
'The prone creation, yields what once suffic'd  
Their dainty sovereign, when the world was young ;  
Ere yet the barbarous thirst of blood had seiz'd  
The human breast. Each rolling month matures  
'The food that suits it most ; so does each clime.

Far in the horrid realms of winter, where  
Th' establish'd ocean heaps a monstrous waste  
Of shining rocks and mountains to the pole ;  
There lives a hardy race, whose plainest wants  
Relentless earth, their cruel step-mother,  
Regards not. On the waste of iron fields,  
Untam'd, intractable, no harvests wave :  
Pomona hates them, and the clownish god  
Who tends the garden. In this frozen world  
Such cooling gifts were vain : a fitter meal  
Is earn'd with ease ; for here the fruitful spawn  
Of Ocean swarms, and heaps their genial board  
With generous fare, and luxury profuse.  
These are their bread, the only bread they know ;  
These, and their willing slave the deer, that crops  
The scrubby herbage on their meagre hills,  
Or scales, for fattening moss, the savage rocks.  
Girt by the burning Zone, not thus the South  
Her swarthy sons, in either Ind, maintains ;  
Or thirsty Lybia ; from whose fervid loins  
The lion bursts, and every fiend that roams  
'Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd,  
Adult and dry, no sweet repast affords ;

Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce  
So perfect, so delicious, as the shoals  
Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood  
Brews feverish frays ; where scarce the tubes sustain  
Its tumid fervour and tempestuous course ;  
Kind nature tempts not to such gifts as these.  
But here in livid ripeness melts the Grape ;  
Here, finish'd by invigorating suns,  
'Thro' the green shade the golden Orange glows ;  
Spontaneous here the turgid Melon yields  
A generous pulp ; the Cocoa swells on high  
With milky riches ; and in horrid mail  
The crisp Ananas wraps its poignant sweets :  
Earth's vaunted progeny—In ruder air  
Too coy to flourish, e'en too proud to live ;  
Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire  
To vapid life. Here with a mother's smile  
Glad Amalthea pours her copious horn ;  
Here buxom Ceres reigns ; th' autumnal sea  
In boundless billows fluctuates o'er their plains.  
What suits the climate best, what suits the men,  
Nature profuses most, and most the taste  
Demands. The fountain, edg'd with racy wine  
Or acid fruit, bedews their thirsty souls.  
The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs  
Supports in else intolerable air :  
While the cool Palm, the Plantain, and the grove  
That waves on gloomy Lebanon, assuage  
The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead ;  
Now let me wander through your gelid reign :

I bourn to view th' enthusiastic wilds  
By mortal else untrod. I hear the din  
Of waters thundering o'er the ruin'd cliffs.  
With holy reverence I approach the rocks  
Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.  
Here from the desert down the rumbling steep  
First springs the Nile ; here bursts the sounding Po  
In angry waves ; Euphrates hence devolves  
A mighty flood to water half the east ;  
And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,  
The cheerless Tanais pours his hoary urn.  
What solemn twilight ! What stupendous shades  
Enwrap these infant floods ! Thro' every nerve  
A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear  
Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round ;  
And more gigantic still th' impending trees  
Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.  
Are these the confines of some fairy world ?  
The land of Genii ? Say, beyond these wilds  
What unknown nations ? If indeed beyond  
Aught habitable lies. And whither leads,  
To what strange regions, or of bliss or pain,  
That subterraneous way ? Propitious maids,  
Conduct me, while with fearful steps I tread  
This trembling ground. The task remains to sing  
Your gifts (so Pæon, so the powers of health  
Command) to praise your chrystal element :  
The chief ingredient in heaven's various works ;  
Whose flexile genius sparkles in the gem,  
Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine ;  
The vehicle, the source of nutriment  
And life, to all that vegetate or live.



O comfortable streams ! with eager lips  
 And trembling hand the languid thirsty quaff  
 New life in you ; fresh vigour fills their veins.  
 No warmer cups the rural ages knew ;  
 None warmer sought the fires of human kind.  
 Happy in temperate peace ! Their equal days  
 Felt not th' alternate fits of feverish mirth,  
 And sick dejection. Still serene and pleas'd,  
 They knew no pains but what the tender soul  
 With pleasure yields to, and would ne'er forget.  
 Blest with divine immunity from ails,  
 Long centuries they liv'd ; their only fate  
 Was ripe old age, and rather sleep than death.  
 Oh ! could those worthies from the world of Gods  
 Return to visit their degenerate sons,  
 How would they scorn the joys of modern time  
 With all our art and toil improv'd to pain !  
 Too happy they ! But wealth brought luxury,  
 And luxury on sloth begot disease.

Learn temp'rance, friends ; and hear without disdain  
 The choice of water. Thus the Coan\* sage  
 Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of every school.  
 What least of foreign principles partakes  
 Is best : the lightest then ; what bears the touch  
 Of fire the least, and soonest mounts in air ;  
 The most insipid ; the most void of smell.  
 Such the rude mountain from his horrid sides  
 Pours down ; such waters in the sandy vale  
 Forever boil, alike of winter's frost

\* *Hippocrates.*



And summer's heat secure. The crystal stream,  
 Thro' rocks resounding, or for many a mile  
 O'er the chaf'd pebbles hurl'd, yields wholesome, pure  
 And mellow draughts ; except when winter thaws,  
 And half the mountains melt into the tide.  
 Though thirst were e'er so resolute, avoid  
 The sordid lake, and all such drowsy floods  
 As fill from Lethe Belgia's slow canals ;  
 (With rest corrupt, with vegetation green ;  
 Squalid with generation, and the birth  
 Of little monsters ;) till the power of fire  
 Has from profane embraces disengag'd  
 The violated lymph. The virgin stream  
 In boiling wastes its finer soul in air.

Nothing like simple element dilutes -  
 The food, or gives the chyle so soon to flow.  
 But where the stomach, indolent and cold,  
 Toys with its duty, animate with wine  
 Th' insipid stream ; the golden Ceres yields  
 A more voluptuous, a more sprightly draught ;  
 Perhaps more active. Wine unmix'd, and all  
 The gluey floods that from the vex'd abyss  
 Of fermentation spring ; with spirit fraught,  
 And furious with intoxicating fire ;  
 Retard concoction, and preserve unthaw'd  
 Th' embodied mass. You see what countless years,  
 Embalm'd in fiery quintessence of wine,  
 The puny wonders of the reptile world,  
 The tender rudiments of life, the slim  
 Unravellings of minute anatomy,  
 Maintain their texture, and unchang'd remain,

We curse not wine : the vile excess we blame ;  
 More fruitful than th' accumulated board,  
 Of pain and misery. For the subtle draught  
 Faster and surer swells the vital tide ;  
 And with more active poison, than the floods  
 Of grosser crudity convey, pervades  
 The far remote meanders of our frame.  
 Ah ! fly deceiver ! branded o'er and o'er,  
 Yet still believ'd ! exulting o'er the wreck  
 Of sober vows !—But the Parnassian maids  
 Another time,\* perhaps shall sing the joys,  
 The fatal charms, the many woes of wine ;  
 Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Meantime, I would not always dread the bowl,  
 Nor every trespass shun. The feverish strife,  
 Rous'd by the rare debauch, subdues, expels,  
 The loitering crudities that burden life ;  
 And, like a torrent full and rapid, clears  
 Th' obstructed tubes. Besides, this restless world  
 Is full of chances, which by habit's power  
 To learn to bear, is easier than to shun.  
 Ah ! when ambition, meagre love of gold,  
 Or sacred country calls, with mellowing wine  
 To moisten well the thirsty suffrages :  
 Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays  
 Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend  
 With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd ?  
 Then learn to revel ; but by slow degrees :  
 By slow degrees the liberal arts are won ;  
 And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth

\* See Book iv.

The brows of care, indulge your festive vein  
In cups by well-inform'd experience found ;  
The least your bane ; and only with your friends.  
There are sweet follies ; frailties to be seen  
By friends alone, and men of generous minds.

Oh ! seldom may the fated hours return  
Of drinking deep ! I would not daily taste,  
Except when life declines, even sober cups.  
Weak withering age no rigid law forbids,  
With frugal nectar, smooth and flow with balm,  
The sapless habit daily to bedew,  
And give the hesitating wheels of life  
Gliblier to play. But youth has better joys :  
And is it wise, when youth with pleasure flows,  
To squander the reliefs of age and pain ?

What dextrous thousands just within the goal  
Of wild debauch direct their nightly course !  
Perhaps no sickly qualms bedim their days,  
No morning admonitions shock the head.  
But ah ! what woes remain ! life rolls apace,  
And that incurable disease, old age,  
In youthful bodies more severely felt,  
More sternly active, shakes their blasted prime :  
Except kind nature by some hasty blow  
Prevent the lingering fates. For know, whate'er  
Beyond its natural fervour hurries on,  
The sanguine tide ; whether the frequent bowl,  
High-season'd fare, or exercise to toil  
Protracted ; spurs to its last stage tir'd life,  
And sows the temples with untimely snow.

When life is new, the ductile fibres feel  
 The heart's increasing force; and, day by day,  
 The growth advances; till the larger tubes,  
 Acquiring (from their elemental\* veins,  
 Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,  
 Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood.  
 Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse  
 And pressure, still the great destroy the small;  
 Still with the ruins of the small grow strong.  
 Life glows meantime, amid the grinding force  
 Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes;  
 Its various functions vigorously are plied  
 By strong machinery; and in solid health  
 The man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease.  
 But the full ocean ebbs; there is a point,  
 By nature fix'd, whence life must downward tend.  
 For still the beating tide consolidates  
 The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still  
 To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart.  
 This languishing, these strength'ning by degrees

*\* In the human body, as well as in those of other animals, the larger blood vessels are composed of smaller ones; which, by the violent motion and pressure of the fluids in the large vessels, lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords or fibres. In proportion as these small vessels become solid, the larger must of course grow less extensile, more rigid, and make a stronger resistance to the action of the heart, and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progress of the human body, from infancy to old age, is accounted for.*

To hard, unyielding, unelastic bone,  
Through tedious channels the congealing flood  
Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on ;  
It loiters still : and now it stirs no more.  
This is the period few attain ; the death  
Of nature ; thus (so heav'n ordain'd it) life  
Destroys itself ; and could these laws have chang'd  
Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate ;  
And Homer live immortal as his song.

What does not fade? The tower that long had stood  
The crash of thunder and the warring winds,  
Shook by the slow but sure destroyer Time,  
Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base.  
And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass,  
Descend : the Babylonian spires are sunk ;  
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down.  
Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,  
And tottering empires rush by their own weight.  
This huge rotundity we tread grows old,  
And all those worlds that roll around the sun,  
The sun himself, shall die, and ancient Night]  
Again involve the desolate abyss :  
Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeless gloom  
Extend his arm to light another world,  
And bid new planets roll by other laws.  
For thro' the regions of unbounded space,  
Where unconfined Omnipotence has room,  
BEING, in various systems, fluctuates still  
Between creation and abhor'd decay :  
It ever did : perhaps and ever will.  
New worlds are still emerging from the deep ;  
The old descending, in their turns to rise.



THE  
THIRD BOOK  
OF THE  
*ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.*  
.....  
EXERCISE.





THE  
ART  
OF  
PRESERVING HEALTH



BOOK III.

*EXERCISE.*

THRO' various toils th'adventurous Muse has past ;  
But half the toil, and more than half, remains.  
Rude is her theme, and hardly fit for Song ;  
Plain and of little ornament ; and I  
But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts :  
Yet not in vain such labours have we tried,  
If aught these lays the fickle health confirm.  
To you, ye delicate, I write ; for you  
I tame my youth to philosophic cares,  
And grow still paler by the midnight lamp.  
Not to debilitate with timorous rules  
A hardy frame ; nor needlessly to brave  
Inglorious dangers, proud of mortal strength,  
Is all the lesson that in wholesome years  
Concerns the strong. His care were ill bestow'd

Who would with warm effeminacy nurse  
 The thriving oak, which on the mountains brow  
 Bears all the blasts that sweep the wintry heav'n.

Behold the labourer of the glebe who toils  
 In dust, in rain, in cold and sultry skies :  
 Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,  
 Nought anxious he what sickly stars ascend.  
 He knows no laws by Esculapius given ;  
 He studies none. Yet him nor midnight fogs  
 Infect, nor those envenom'd shafts that fly  
 When rapid Sirius fires the autumnal noon.  
 His habit pure with plain and temperate meals,  
 Robust with labour, and by custom steel'd  
 To every casualty of varied life ;  
 Serene he bears the peevish eastern blast  
 And uninfected breathes the mortal south.

Such the reward of rude and sober life ;  
 Of labour such. By health the peasant's toil  
 Is well repaid ; if exercise were pain  
 Indeed, and temperance pain. By arts like these  
 Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons ;  
 And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,  
 Unhurt, through every toil in every clime.

Toil, and be strong. By toil the flaccid nerves  
 Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone ;  
 The greener juices are by toil subdu'd,  
 Mellow'd, and subtilis'd ; the vapid old  
 Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.  
 Come, my companions, ye who feel the charms

Of nature and the year ; come, let us stray  
Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk ;  
Come, while the soft voluptuous breezes fan  
The fleecy heavens, enwrap the limbs in balm,  
And shed a charming languor o'er the soul.  
Nor when bright Winter sows with prickly frost  
The vigorous ether, in unmanly warmth  
Indulge at home ; nor even when Eurus' blasts  
This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.  
My liberal walks, save when the skies in rain  
Or fogs relent, no season should confine  
Or to the cloister'd gallery or arcade.  
Go, climb the mountain ; from th' ethereal source  
Imbibe the recent gale. The cheerful morn  
Beams o'er the hills ; go, mount th' exulting steed.  
Already, see, the deep-mouth'd beagles catch  
The tainted mazes ; and, on eager sport  
Intent, with emulous impatience try  
Each doubtful trace. Or, if a nobler prey  
Delight you more, go chase the desperate deer ;  
And through its deepest solitudes awake  
The vocal forest with the jovial horn.

But if the breathless chase o'er hill and dale  
Exceed your strength ; a sport of less fatigue,  
Nor less delightful, the prolific stream  
Affords. The crystal rivulet, that o'er  
A stony channel rolls its rapid maze  
Swarms with the silver fry. Such, thro' the bounds  
Of pastoral Stafford, runs the brawling Trent ;  
Such Eden, sprung from Cumbrian mountains ; such  
The Esk, o'erhung with woods ; and such the streams

On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,  
 Liddal ; till now, except in Doric lays  
 Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,  
 Unknown in song : though not a purer stream,  
 Thro' meads more flowery, more romantic groves,  
 Rolls towards the western main. Hail, sacred flood !  
 May still thy hospitable swains be blest  
 In rural innocence ; thy mountains still  
 Teem with the fleecy race ; thy tuneful woods  
 Forever flourish ; and thy vales look gay  
 With painted meadows, and the golden grain !  
 Oft, with thy blooming sons, when life was new  
 Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,  
 In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd :  
 Oft trac'd with patient steps thy fairy banks,  
 With the well imitated fly to hook  
 The eager trout, and with the slender line  
 And yielding rod solicit to the shore  
 The struggling, panting prey : while vernal clouds  
 And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool,  
 And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

Form'd on the Samian school, or those of Ind,  
 There are who think these pastimes scarce humane.  
 Yet in my mind (and not relentless I)  
 His life is pure that wears no fouler stains.  
 But if, thro' genuine tenderness of heart,  
 Or secret want of relish for the game,  
 You shun the glories of the chase, nor care  
 To haunt the peopled stream ; the garden yields  
 A soft amusement, an humane delight.  
 T' escape th' insipid nature of the ground ;

Or tame its savage genius to the grace  
 Of careless, sweet rusticity, that seems  
 The amiable result of happy chance;  
 Is to create; and gives a god-like joy,  
 Which every year improves. Nor thou disdain  
 To check the lawless riot of the trees,  
 To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould.  
 O happy he! whom, when his years decline,  
 (His fortune and his fame by worthy means  
 Attain'd, and equal to his moderate mind;  
 His life approv'd by all the wise and good,  
 Even envied by the vain,) the peaceful groves  
 Of Epicurus, from this stormy world,  
 Receive to rest; of all ungrateful cares  
 Absolv'd, and sacred from the selfish crowd.  
 Happiest of men! if the same soil invites  
 A chosen few, companions of his youth,  
 Once fellow-rakes, perhaps, now rural friends;  
 With whom, in easy commerce, to pursue  
 Nature's free charms, and vie for sylvan fame:  
 A fair ambition; void of strife or guile,  
 Or jealousy, or pain to be outdone:  
 Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs  
 The visio best, and best conducts the stream;  
 Whose groves the fastest thicken and ascend;  
 Who first the welcome spring salutes; who shews  
 The earliest bloom, the sweetest; proudest charms  
 Of Flora; who best gives Pomona's juice  
 To match the sprightly genius of Champaign.  
 Thrice happy days! in rural business past;  
 Blest winter nights! when, as the genial fire  
 Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family

With soft domestic arts the hours beguile,  
 And pleasing talk that starts no timorous fame,  
 With witlefs wantonnefs to hunt it down :  
 Or through the fairy-land of tale or fong  
 Delighted, wander, in fictitious fates  
 Engag'd, and all that ftrikes humanity :  
 'Till loft in fable, they the ftealing hour  
 Of timely reft forget. Sometimes, at eve,  
 His neighbours lift the latch, and blefs unbict  
 His feftal roof ; while, o'er the light repaft,  
 And fprightly cups, they mix in focial joy ;  
 And, thro' the maze of converfation trace  
 Whate'er amufes or improves the mind.  
 Sometimes at eve (for I delight to tafte  
 The native zeft and flavour of the fruit,  
 Where fenfe grows wild and takes of no manure)  
 The decent, honeft, cheerful nufbandman  
 Should drown his labour in my friendly bowl ;  
 And at my table find himfelf at home.

Whate'er your ftudy, in whate'er you fweat,  
 Indulge your tafte. Some love the manly foils ;  
 The tennis fome ; and fome the graceful dance.  
 Others, more hardy, range the purple heath,  
 Or naked flubble ; where from field to field  
 The founding coveys urge their labouring flight :  
 Eager amid the rifing cloud to pour  
 The gun's unceasing thunder ; and there are  
 Whom ftill the meed\* of the green archer charms.

*\* This word is much ufed by fome of the old Englifh poets, and fignifies reward or prize.*

He chooses best, whose labour entertains  
His vacant fancy most : the toil you hate  
Fatigues you soon, and scarce improves your limbs.

As beauty still has blemish ; and the mind  
The most accomplish'd its imperfect side ;  
Few bodies are there of that happy mould  
But some one part is weaker than the rest :  
The legs, perhaps, or arms refuse their load,  
Or the chest labours. These assiduously,  
But gently, in their proper arts employ'd,  
Acquire a vigour and elastic spring  
To which they were not born. But weaker parts  
Abhor fatigue and violent discipline.

Begin with gentle toils ; and, as your nerves  
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire.  
The prudent, even in every moderate walk,  
At first but saunter ; and by slow degrees  
Increase their pace. This doctrine of the wise  
Well knows the master of the flying steed.  
First from the goal the manag'd coursers play  
On bended reins ; as yet the skilful youth  
Repress their foamy pride ; but every breath  
The race grows warmer, and the tempest swells ;  
Till all the fiery mettle has its way,  
And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.  
When all at once from indolence to toil  
You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock  
Are tir'd and crack'd, before their unctuous coats  
Compress'd, can pour the lubricating balm.  
Besides, collected in the passive veins,

The purple mass a sudden torrent rolls;  
 O'erpowers the heart, and deluges the lungs  
 With dangerous inundation : oft the source  
 Of fatal woes ; a cough that foams with blood,  
 Asthma, and feller Peripneumony,\*  
 Or the slow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic Fool, to whom what heav'n deni'd  
 Of soul, is well compensated in limbs,  
 Oft from his rage, or brainless frolic, feels  
 His vegetation and brute force decay.  
 The men of better clay and finer mould  
 Know nature, feel the human dignity ;  
 And scorn to vie with oxen and with apes.  
 Pursued proluxly, even the gentlest toil  
 Is waste of health : repose by small fatigue  
 Is earn'd ; and (where your habit is not prone  
 'To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.  
 The fine and subtle spirits cost too much  
 'To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm..  
 But when the hard varieties of life  
 You toil to learn ; or try the dusty chase,  
 Or the warm deeds of some important day ;  
 Hot from the field, indulge not yet your limbs  
 In wish'd repose ; nor court the fanning gale,  
 Nor taste the spring. O ! by the sacred tears  
 Of widows, orphans, mothers, sisters, fires,  
 Forbear ! No other pestilence has driven  
 Such Myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.  
 Why this so fatal, the sagacious Muse.

\* *The inflammation of the lungs.*



Thro' nature's cunning labyrinths could trace :  
But there are secrets which who knows not now,  
Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps  
Of science ; and devote seven years to toil.  
Besides, I would not stun your patient ears  
With what it little boots you to attain.  
He knows enough, the mariner, who knows  
Where lurk the shelves, and where the whirlpools boil ;  
What signs portend the storm : to subtler minds  
He leaves to scan, from what mysterious cause  
Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave ;  
Whence those impetuous currents in the main  
Which neither oar nor sail can stem ; and why  
The roughening deep expects the storm, as sure  
As red Orion mounts the shrouded heaven.

In antient times, when Rome with Athens vied  
For polish'd luxury and useful arts ;  
All hot and reeking from the Olympic strife,  
And warm Palestra, in the tepid bath  
'Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary limbs.  
Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs  
Of Nard and Cassia fraught, to sooth and heal  
The cherish'd nerves. Our less voluptuous clime  
Not much invites us to such arts as these.  
'Tis not for those whom gelid skies embrace,  
And chilling fogs ; whose perspiration feels  
Such frequent bars from Eurys and the North ;  
'Tis not for those to cultivate a skin  
Too soft ; or teach the recremental fume  
Too fast to crowd through such precarious ways.  
For thro' the small arterial mouths, that pierce

In endless millions the close woven skin,  
The baser fluids in a constant stream  
Escape, and viewless melt into the winds.  
While this eternal, this most copious waste  
Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,  
Maintains its wonted measure, all the powers  
Of health befriend you, all the wheels of life  
With ease and pleasure move ; but this restrain'd  
Or more or less, so more or less you feel  
The functions labour : from this fatal source  
What woes descend is never to be sung.  
To take their numbers were to count the sands  
That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Lybian air ;  
Or waves that, when the blustering North embroils  
The Baltic, thunder on the German shore.  
Subject not then by soft emollient arts  
This grand expense, on which your fates depend,  
To every caprice of the sky ; nor thwart  
The genius of your clime : for from the blood  
Least fickle rise the recremental streams,  
And least obnoxious to the styptic air,  
Which breathe thro' straiter and more callous pores.  
The temper'd Scythian hence, half naked treads  
His boundless snows, nor rues th' inclement heaven ;  
And hence our painted ancestors defied  
The East : nor curs'd, like us, their fickle sky.

The body, moulded by the clime, endures  
Th' Equator heats or Hyperborean frost :  
Except by habits foreign to its turn,  
Unwise you counteract its forming pow'r.  
Rude at the first, the winter shocks you less.

By long acquaintance : study then your sky,  
Form to its manners your obsequious frame,  
And learn to suffer what you cannot shun.  
Against the rigours of a damp cold heav'n  
To fortify their bodies, some frequent  
The gelid cistern ; and, where nought forbids,  
I praise their dauntless heart : a frame so steel'd  
Dreads not the cough, not those ungenial blasts  
That breathe the tertian or fell rheumatism :  
The nerves so temper'd, never quit their tone,  
No chronic languors haunt such hardy breasts.  
But all things have their bounds : and he who makes,  
By daily use, the kindest regimen  
Essential to his health, should never mix  
With human kind, nor art nor trade pursue.  
He not the safe vicissitudes of life  
Without some shock endures ; ill-fitted he  
To want the known, or bear unusual things.  
Besides, the powerful remedies of pain  
(Since pain in spite of all our care will come)  
Should never with your prosperous days of health  
Grow too familiar : for by frequent use  
The strongest medicines lose their healing power,  
And even the surest poisons theirs to kill.

Let those who from the frozen Arctos reach  
Parch'd Mauritania, or the sultry West,  
Or the wide flood through rich Indostan roll'd,  
Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave  
Untwist their stubborn pores ; that full and free  
Th' evaporation through the soften'd skin  
May bear proportion to the swelling blood.

So shall they 'scape the fever's rapid flames ;  
So feel untainted the hot breath of hell.  
With us, the man of no complaint demands  
The warm ablution just enough to clear  
The fluices of the skin, enough to keep  
The body sacred from indecent soil.  
Still to be pure, even did it not conduce  
(As much it does) to health, were greatly worth  
Your daily pains. 'Tis this adorns the rich ;  
The want of this is Poverty's worst woe ;  
With this external virtue, age maintains  
A decent grace ; without it youth and charms  
Are loathsome. This the venal Graces know ;  
So doubtless do your wives : for married fires,  
As well as lovers, still pretend to taste ;  
Nor is it less (all prudent wives can tell)  
To lose a husband's than a lover's heart.

But now the hours and seasons when to toil  
From foreign themes recal my wandering song.  
Some labour fasting, or but slightly fed,  
To lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage.  
Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame  
'Tis wisely done ; for while the thirsty veins,  
Impatient of lean penury, devour  
The treasur'd oil, then is the happiest time  
To shake the lazy balsam from its cells.  
Now while the stomach from the full repast  
Subsides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,  
Ye leaner habits, give an hour to toil :  
And ye, whom no luxuriancy of growth  
Oppresses yet, or threatens to oppress.

But from the recent meal no labours please,  
Of limbs or mind. For now the cordial powers  
Claim all the wandering spirits to a work  
Of strong and subtile toil, and great event :  
A work of time : and you may rue the day  
You hurried, with untimely exercise,  
And half-concocted chyle into the blood.  
The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm  
Much toil demands : the lean elastic less.  
While winter chills the blood, and binds the veins,  
No labours are too hard : by those you 'scape  
The slow diseases of the torpid year ;  
Endless to name ; to one of which alone,  
To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves  
Is pleasure : Oh ! from such inhuman pains  
May all be free who merit not the wheel !  
But from the burning Lion when the sun  
Pours down his sultry wrath ; now while the blood  
Too much already maddens in the veins,  
And all the finer fluids through the skin  
Explore their flight ; me, near the cool cascade  
Reclin'd, or saunt'ring in the leafy grove,  
No needles, slight occasion should engage  
To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon.  
Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve  
To shady walks and active rural sports  
Invite. But, while the chilling dews descend,  
May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace  
Of humid skies ; though 'tis no vulgar joy  
To trace the horrors of the solemn wood  
While the soft evening saddens into night :

Though the sweet Poet of the vernal groves  
Melts all the night in strains of am'rous woe.

The shades descend, and midnight o'er the world  
Expands her sable wings. Great Nature droops  
Through all her works. How happy he whose toil  
Has o'er his languid, powerless limbs diffus'd  
A pleasing lassitude : he not in vain  
Invokes the gentle Deity of dreams.  
His powers the most voluptuously dissolve  
In soft repose : on him the balmy dews  
Of Sleep with double nutriment descend.  
But would you sweetly waste the blank of night  
In deep oblivion ; or on Fancy's wings  
Visit the paradise of happy dreams,  
And waken cheerful as the lively morn ;  
Oppress not Nature sinking down to rest  
With feasts too late, too solid, or too full :  
But be the first concoction half-matur'd  
Ere you to mighty indolence resign  
Your passive faculties. He from the toils  
And troubles of the day to heavier toil  
Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks  
Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,  
The busy demons hurl ; or in the main  
O'erwhelm ; or bury struggling under ground.  
Not all a monarch's luxury the woes  
Can counterpoise of that most wretched man,  
Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits  
Of wild Orestes ; whose delirious brain,  
Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought :  
While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul ;

And mangled consciofnefs bemoans itself  
For ever torn ; and chaos floating round.  
What dreams prefage, what dangers these or those  
Portend to sanity, though prudent feers  
Reveal'd of old, and men of deathless fame;  
We would not to the superstitious mind  
Suggest new throbs, new vanities of fear.  
'Tis ours to teach you from a peaceful night  
To banish omens and all restless woes.

In study some protract the silent hours,  
Which others consecrate to mirth and wine ;  
And sleep till noon, and hardly live till night :  
But surely this redeems not from the shades  
One hour of life. Nor does it nought avail  
What season you to drowsy Morpheus give  
Of th' ever varying circle of the day ;  
Or whether, through the tedious winter gloom,  
You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.  
'The body, fresh and vigorous from repose,  
Defies the early fogs : but, by the toils  
Of wakeful day, exhausted and unstrung,  
Weakly resist the night's unwholesome breath :  
'The grand discharge, th' effusion of the skin,  
Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies  
Creep on, and through the sick'ning functions steal.  
So, when the chilling East invades the spring,  
The delicate Narcissus pines away  
In hectic languor : and a slow disease  
'Taints all the family of flowers, condemn'd  
'To cruel heav'ns. But why, already prone  
To fade, should beauty cherish its own bane ?



O shame ! O pity ! nipt with pale quadrille,  
And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies !

By toil subdu'd, the warrior and the hind  
Sleep fast and deep : their active functions soon  
With generous stream the subtile tubes supply ;  
And soon the tonic, irritable nerves  
Feel the fresh impulse, and awake the soul.  
'The sons of indolence, with long repose,  
Grow torpid : and with slowest Lethe drunk,  
Feebly and ling'ringly return to life,  
Blunt every sense, and pow'rless every limb.  
Ye prone to sleep, (whom sleeping most annoys)  
On the hard mattress or elastic couch  
Extend your limbs, and wean yourselves from sloth ;  
Nor grudge the lean projector, or dry brain  
And springy nerves, the blandishments of down :  
Nor envy, while the buried bacchanal  
Exhales his forfeit in prolixer dreams.

He, without riot, in the balmy feast  
Of life, the wants of nature has suppli'd,  
Who rises cool, serene, and full of soul.  
But pliant nature more or less demands,  
As custom forms her ; and all sudden change  
She hates of habit, even from bad to good.  
If faults in life, or new emergencies,  
From habits urge you by long time confirm'd,  
Slow may the change arrive, and stage by stage ;  
Slow as the shadow o'er the dial moves,  
Slow as the stealing progress of the year.



Observe the circling year. How unperceiv'd  
Her seasons change ! Behold ! by slow degrees,  
Stern Winter tam'd into a ruder Spring ;  
The ripen'd Spring a milder Summer glows ;  
Departing Summer sheds Pomona's store ;  
And aged Autumn brews the winter-storm.  
Slow as they come, these changes come not void :  
Of mortal flocks : the cold and torrid reigns,  
The two great periods of th' important year,  
Are in their first approaches seldom safe :  
Funereal Autumn all the sickly dread,  
And the black fates deform the lovely Spring.  
He well advis'd who taught our wiser sires  
Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils,  
Ere the first frost has touch'd the tender blade ;  
And late resign them, though the wanton Spring  
Should deck her charms with all her sister's rays.  
For while the effluence of the skin maintains  
Its native measure, the pleuritic Spring  
Glides harmless by ; and Autumn, sick to death  
With fallow quartans, no contagion breathes.

I in prophetic numbers could unfold  
The omens of the year : what seasons teem  
With what diseases ; what the humid South  
Prepares, and what the demon of the East :  
But you perhaps refuse the tedious song.  
Besides, whatever plagues in heat, or cold,  
Or drought, or moisture, dwell, they hurt not you  
Skill'd to correct the vices of the sky,  
And taught already how to each extreme  
To bend your life. But should the public bane

Infect you ; or some trespass of your own,  
Or flaw of nature, hint mortality ;  
Soon as a not unpleasing horror glides  
Along the spine, thro' all your torpid limbs ;  
When first the head throbs, or the stomach feels  
A sickly load, a weary pain the loins ;  
Be Celsus call'd ; the Fates come rushing on ;  
'The rapid Fates admit of no delay.  
While wilful you, and fatally secure,  
Expect to-morrow's more auspicious sun,  
The growing pest, whose infancy was weak  
And easy vanquish'd, with triumphant sway  
O'erpow'rs your life. For want of timely care,  
Millions have died of medicable wounds.

Ah ! in what perils is vain life engag'd !  
What slight neglects, what trivial faults destroy  
The hardiest frame ! of indolence, of toil,  
We die ; of want, of superfluity :  
The all-surrounding heaven, the vital air,  
Is big with death. And tho' the putrid South  
Be shut ; tho' no convulsive agony  
Shake, from the deep foundations of the world,  
'Th' imprison'd plagues ; a secret venom oft  
Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.  
What livid deaths has sad Byzantium seen !  
How oft has Cairo, with a mother's woe,  
Wept o'er her slaughter'd sons and lonely streets !  
Even Albion, girt with less malignant skies,  
Albion the poison of the Gods has drunk,  
And felt the sting of monsters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent  
Their ancient rage, at Bosworth's purple field ;  
While, for which tyrant England should receive,  
Her legions in incestuous murder mix'd,  
And daily horrors ; till the Fates were drunk  
With kindred blood by kindred hands profus'd ;  
Another plague of more gigantic arm  
Arose, a monster never known before,  
Rear'd from Cocytus its portentous head.  
This rapid Fury, not like other pests  
Pursu'd a gradual course, but in a day  
Rush'd as a storm o'er half the astonish'd isle,  
And strew'd with sudden carcases the land.

First through the shoulders, or whatever part  
Was seiz'd the first, a fervid vapour sprung.  
With rash combustion, thence the quivering spark  
Shot to the heart, and kindled all within ;  
And soon the surface caught the spreading fires.  
Thro' all the yielding pores, the melted blood  
Gush'd out in smoky sweats ; but nought assuag'd  
The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd  
The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,  
Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain,  
They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream  
Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.  
The restless arteries with rapid blood  
Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly  
The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'ring heav'd.  
At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head,  
A wild delirium came ; their weeping friends  
Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.

Harraſſ'd with toil on toil, the ſinking powers  
Lay proſtrate and o'erthrown ; a ponderous ſleep,  
Wrapt all the ſenſes up : they ſlept and died.

In ſome a gentle horror crept at firſt  
O'er all the limbs ; the ſuices of the ſkin  
Withheld their moiſture, till, by art provok'd,  
The ſweats o'erflow'd ; but in a clammy tide :  
Now free and copious, now reſtrain'd and flow ;  
Of tinctures various, as the temperature  
Had mix'd the blood ; and rank with fetid ſteams :  
As if the pent-up humours, by delay  
Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign.  
Here lay their hopes (tho' little hope remain'd)  
With full effuſion of perpetual ſweats  
To drive the venom out. And here the fates  
Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.  
For, who ſurviv'd the ſun's diurnal race,  
Roſe from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd :  
Some the ſixth hour oppreſſ'd, and ſome the third.

Of many thouſands few untainted 'ſcap'd ;  
Of thoſe infected fewer 'ſcap'd alive :  
Of thoſe who liv'd, ſome felt a ſecond blow ;  
And whom the ſecond ſpar'd a third deſtroy'd.  
Frantic with fear, they ſought by flight to ſhun  
The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land  
'Th' infected city pour'd her hurrying ſwarms :  
Roſe'd by the flames that fir'd her ſeats around,  
'Th' infected country ruſh'd into the town.  
Some ſad at home, and in the deſert ſome,  
Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind :

In vain : where'er they fled, the Fates pursu'd.  
Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the main,  
'To seek protection in far distant skies ;  
But none they found. It seem'd the general air,  
From pole to pole, from Atlas to the East,  
Was then at enmity with English blood.  
For, but the race of England, all were safe  
In foreign climes ; nor did this fury taste  
The foreign blood which England then contain'd.  
Where should they fly ? The circumambient heaven  
Involv'd them still ; and every breeze was baneful.  
Where find relief ? The salutary art  
Was mute ; and startled at the new disease,  
In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave.  
To heaven with suppliant rites they sent their pray'rs ;  
Heaven heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd ;  
Fatigu'd with vain resources ; and subdued  
With woes resistless and enfeebling fear ;  
Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow.  
Nothing but lamentable sounds was heard,  
Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.  
Infectious horror ran from face to face,  
And pale despair. 'Twas all the business then.  
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.  
In heaps they fell ; and oft one bed, they say,  
The sick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the Fates depend  
Of tottering Albion ! ye eternal fires  
That lead thro' heav'n the wand'ring year ! ye powers  
That o'er th' encircling elements preside !  
May nothing worse than what this age has seen.

Arrive ! Enough abroad, enough at home  
Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heaven  
Has thinn'd her cities ; from those lofty cliffs  
That awe proud Gaul, to Thule's wintry reign ;  
While in the West, beyond th' Atlantic foam,  
Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have di'd  
The death of cowards and of common men ;  
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

But from these views the weeping Muses turn,  
And other themes invite my wandering song.

THE  
FOURTH BOOK  
OF THE  
*ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.*

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THE PASSIONS.





THE  
A R T  
OF  
PRESERVING HEALTH.

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BOOK IV.

*THE PASSIONS.*

THE choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,  
The use of Toil, and all external things,  
Already sung ; it now remains to trace  
What good, what evil from ourselves proceeds :  
And how the subtile Principle within  
Inspires with health, or mines with strange decay  
The passive body. Ye poetic Shades,  
'That know the secrets of the world unseen;  
Assist my song ! For, in a doubtful theme  
Engag'd, I wander thro' mysterious ways.

There is, they say, (and I believe there is)  
A spark within us of th' immortal fire,  
That animates and moulds the grosser frame ;  
And, when the body sinks, escapes to heaven,

Its native seat, and mixes with the Gods.  
 Meanwhile this heavenly particle pervades  
 The mortal elements : in every nerve  
 It thrills with pleasure, or grows mad with pain.  
 And, in its secret conclave, as it feels  
 The body's woes and joys, this ruling power  
 Wields at its will the dull material world,  
 And is the body's health or malady.

By its own toil the gross, corporeal frame  
 Fatigues, extenuates, or destroys itself,  
 Nor less the labours of the mind corrode  
 The solid fabric : for by subtile parts  
 And viewless atoms, secret Nature moves  
 The mighty wheels of this stupendous world.  
 By subtile fluids pour'd thro' subtile tubes  
 The natural, vital functions are perform'd.  
 By these the stubborn aliments are tam'd ;  
 The toiling heart distributes life and strength ;  
 These the still-crumbling frame rebuild ; and these  
 Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air.

But 'tis not thought (for still the soul's employ'd)  
 'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay.  
 All day the vacant eye without fatigue  
 Strays o'er the heaven and earth ; but long intent  
 On microscopic arts its vigour fails.  
 Just so the mind, with various thought amus'd,  
 Nor aches itself, nor gives the body pain.  
 But anxious Study, Discontent, and Care,  
 Love without hope, and Hate without revenge,  
 And Fear, and Jealousy, fatigue the soul,

Engross the subtle ministers of life,  
And spoil the lab'ring functions of their share.  
Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears ;  
'The Lover's paleness ; and the fallow hue  
Of Envy, Jealousy ; the meagre stare  
Of fore Revenge : the canker'd body hence  
Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

The strong-built pedant ; who both night and day  
Feeds on the coarsest fare the schools bestow,  
And crudely fattens at gross Burman's stall ;  
O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropfy drown'd,  
Or sinks in lethargy before his time.  
With useful studies you, and arts that please,  
Employ your mind, amuse but not fatigue.  
Peace to each drowsy metaphysic sage !  
And ever may all heavy systems rest !  
Yet some there are, even of elastic parts,  
Whom strong and obstinate ambition leads  
'Thro' all the rugged roads of barren lore,  
And gives to relish what their generous taste  
Would else refuse. But may not thirst of fame,  
Nor love of knowledge, urge you to fatigue  
With constant drudgery the liberal soul.  
'Toy with your books : and, as the various fits  
Of humour seize you, from philosophy  
To fable shift ; from serious Antonine  
To Rabelais' ravings, and from prose to song.

While reading pleases, but no longer, read ;  
And read aloud resounding Homer's strain,  
And wield the thunder of Demosthenes.

The chest so exercis'd improves its strength ;  
And quick vibrations thro' the bowels drive  
The restless blood, which in unactive days  
Would loiter else thro' unelastic tubes.  
Deem it not trifling while I recommend  
What posture suits : to stand and sit by turns,  
As nature prompts, is best. But o'er your leaves  
To lean forever, cramps the vital parts,  
And robs the fine machinery of its play.

'Tis the great art of life to manage well  
The restless mind. Forever on pursuit  
Of knowledge bent, it starves the grosser powers :  
Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose  
It turns its fatal edge, and sharper pangs  
Than what the body knows embitter life.  
Chiefly where Solitude, sad nurse of Care,  
To sickly musing gives the pensive mind,  
There Madness enters ; and the dim-ey'd fiend,  
Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes  
Her own eternal wound. The sun grows pale ;  
A mournful visionary light o'erspreads  
The cheerful face of nature : earth becomes  
A dreary desert, and heaven frowns above.  
Then various shapes of curs'd illusion rise :  
Whate'er the wretched fears, creating fear,  
Forns out of nothing ; and with monsters teems  
Unknown in hell. The prostrate soul beneath  
A load of huge imagination heaves ;  
And all the horrors that the murderer feels  
With anxious flutterings wake the guiltless breast.

Such phantoms Pride in solitary scenes,  
 Or Fear, on delicate Self-love creates.  
 From other cares absolv'd, the busy mind  
 Finds in yourself a theme to pore upon ;  
 It finds you miserable, or makes you so.  
 For while yourself you anxiously explore,  
 Timorous Self-love, with sick'ning Fancy's aid,  
 Presents the danger that you dread the most,  
 And ever galls you in your tender part.  
 Hence some for love, and some for jealousy,  
 For grim religion some, and some for pride,  
 Have lost their reason : some for fear of want  
 Want all their lives ; and others every day  
 For fear of dying suffer worse than death.  
 Ah ! from your bosoms banish, if you can,  
 Those fatal guests : and first, the demon Fear,  
 That trembles at impossible events ;  
 Lest aged Atlas should resign his load,  
 And heaven's eternal battlements rush down.  
 Is there an evil worse than Fear itself ?  
 And what avails it that indulgent Heaven  
 From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,  
 If we, ingenious to torment ourselves,  
 Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own ?  
 Enjoy the present ; nor with needless cares,  
 Of what may spring from blind Misfortune's womb,  
 Appal the surest hour that life bestows.  
 Serene, and master of yourself, prepare  
 For what may come ; and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oft from the body, by long ails mis-tun'd,  
 These evils sprung ; the most important health,

That of the mind, destroy : and when the mind  
They first invade, the conscious body soon  
In sympathetic languishment declines.  
These chronic passions, while from real woes  
They rise, and yet without the body's fault  
Infest the soul, admit one only cure ;  
Diversión, hurry, and a restless life.  
Vain are the consolations of the wife ;  
In vain your friends would reason down your pain.  
O ye, whose souls relentless love has tam'd  
To soft distress, or friends untimely fall'n !  
Court not the luxury of tender thought ;  
Nor deem it impious to forget those pains  
That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.  
Go, soft enthusiast ! quit the cypress groves,  
Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune  
Your sad complaint. Go, seek the cheetful haunts  
Of men, and mingle with the bustling crowd ;  
Lay schemes for wealth, or power, or fame, the wish  
Of nobler minds, and push them night and day.  
Or join the caravan in quest of scenes  
New to your eyes, and shifting every hour,  
Beyond the Alps, beyond the Appenines.  
Or, more advent'rous, rush into the field  
Where war grows hot ; and, raging thro' the sky,  
The lofty trumpet swells the madd'ning soul :  
And in the hardy camp and toilsome march  
Forget all softer and less manly cares.

But most too passive, when the blood runs low,  
Too weakly indolent to strive with pain,  
And bravely by resisting conquer fate,

Try Circe's arts ; and in the tempting bowl  
Of poison'd nectar sweet oblivion swill.  
Struck by the pow'rful charm, the gloom dissolves  
In empty air : Elysium opens round,-  
A pleasing phrenzy buoys the lighten'd soul,  
And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care ;  
And what was difficult, and what was dire,  
Yields to your prowess and superior stars :  
The happiest you of all that e'er were mad,  
Or are, or shall be, could this folly last.  
But soon your heaven is gone ; a heavier gloom  
Shuts o'er your head : and as the thund'ring stream,  
Swoln o'er its banks with sudden mountain rain,  
Sinks from its tumult to a silent brook ;  
So, when the frantic raptures in your breast  
Subside, you languish into mortal man ;  
You sleep, and waking find yourself undone.  
For prodigal of life, in one rash night  
You lavish'd more than might support three days.  
A heavy morning comes ; your cares return  
With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well  
May be endur'd ; so may the throbbing head :  
But such a dim delirium, such a dream,  
Involves you ; such a dastardly despair  
Unmans your soul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt,  
When, baited round Cithæron's cruel sides  
He saw two suns, and double Thebes ascend.  
You curse the sluggish Port ; you curse the wretch,  
The felon, with unnatural mixture first  
Who dar'd to violate the virgin wine.  
Or on the fugitive Champain you pour  
A thousand curses ; for to heav'n it wrapt

Your soul, to plunge you deeper in despair—  
Perhaps you rue even that divinest gift,  
The gay, serene, good-natur'd Burgundy,  
Or the fresh, fragrant vintage of the Rhine :  
And wish that Heaven from mortals had withheld  
The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.

Besides, it wounds you sore to recollect  
What follies in your loose unguarded hour  
Escap'd. For one irrecoverable word,  
Perhaps that meant no harm, you lose a friend.  
Or in the rage of wine your hasty hand  
Perform'd a deed to haunt you to the grave.  
Add that your means, your health, your parts decay ;  
Your friends avoid you ; brutishly transform'd  
They hardly know you ; or if one remains  
To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.  
Despis'd, unwept you fall ; who might have left  
A sacred, cherish'd, sadly-pleasing name ;  
A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.  
Your last ungraceful scene has quite effac'd  
All sense and memory of your former worth.

How to live happiest ; how avoid the pains,  
The disappointments, and disgusts of those  
Who would in pleasure all their hours employ ;  
The precepts here of a divine old man  
I could recite. Tho' old, he still retain'd  
His manly sense, and energy of mind.  
Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe ;  
He still remember'd that he once was young ;  
His easy presence check'd no decent joy.



Him even the dissolute admir'd ; for he  
A graceful looseness when he pleas'd put on,  
And laughing could instruct. Much had he read,  
Much more had seen ; he studied from the life,  
And in th' original perus'd mankind.

Verf'd in the woes and vanities of life,  
He pitied man : and much he pitied those  
Whom falsely-smiling Fate has curs'd with means  
To dissipate their days in quest of joy.  
Our aim is happiness ; 'tis yours, 'tis mine,  
He said, 'tis the pursuit of all that live ;  
Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd.  
But they the widest wander from the mark,  
Who thro' the flowery paths of saunt'ring joy  
Seek this coy goddess ; that from stage to stage  
Invites us still, but shifts as we pursue.  
For, not to name the pains that pleasure brings  
To counterpoise itself, relentless Fate  
Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds  
Should ever roam ; and were the fates more kind,  
Our narrow luxuries would soon grow stale.  
Were these exhaustless, Nature would grow sick,  
And, cloy'd with pleasure, squeamishly complain  
'That all was vanity, and life a dream.  
Let nature rest ; be busy for yourself,  
And for your friend ; be busy ev'n in vain  
Rather than teize her fated appetites.  
Who never fasts, no banquet e'er enjoys,  
Who never toils or watches, never sleeps.  
Let nature rest ; and when the taste of joy  
Grows keen, indulge ; but shun satiety.

'Tis not for mortals always to be blest.  
 But him the least the dull or painful hours  
 Of life oppresses, whom sober sense conducts,  
 And virtue, thro' this labyrinth we tread:  
 Virtue and sense. I mean not to disjoin;  
 Virtue and sense are one: and, trust me, still  
 A faithless heart betrays the head unsound.  
 Virtue (for mere good-nature is a fool)  
 Is sense and spirit, with humanity:  
 'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds;  
 'Tis ev'n vindictive, but in vengeance just.  
 Knaves fain would laugh at it; some great ones dare;  
 But at his heart the most undaunted son  
 Of fortune dreads its name and awful charms.  
 To nobler uses this determines wealth;  
 'This is the solid pomp of prosp'rous days;  
 The peace and shelter of adversity.  
 And if you pant for glory, build your fame  
 On this foundation, which the secret shock  
 Defies of envy and all-sapping time.  
 The gaudy gloss of Fortune only strikes  
 The vulgar eye: the suffrage of the wise,  
 The praise that's worth ambition, is attain'd.  
 By sense alone, and dignity of mind.

Virtue, the strength and beauty of the soul,  
 Is the best gift of heaven: a happiness  
 That even above the smiles and frowns of fate  
 Exalts great Nature's favourites: a wealth  
 That ne'er encumbers, nor can be transferr'd.  
 Riches are oft by guilt and baseness earn'd;  
 Or dealt by chance, to shield a lucky knave,

Or throw a cruel sunshine on a fool.  
But for one end, one much-neglected use,  
Are riches worth your care : (for nature's wants  
Are few, and without opulence suppli'd.)  
This noble end is, to produce the soul ;  
To shew the virtues in their fairest light ;  
To make humanity the minister  
Of bounteous Providence ; and teach the breast  
That generous luxury the gods enjoy.

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly sage  
Sometimes declaim'd. Of right and wrong he taught  
Truths as refin'd as ever Athens heard ;  
And (strange to tell!) he practis'd what he preach'd.  
Skill'd in the passions, how to check their sway  
He knew, as far as reason can control  
The lawless powers. But other cares are mine :  
Form'd in the school of Pæon, I relate  
What passions hurt the body, what improve :  
Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever cheerful and serene  
Supports the mind, supports the body too.  
Hence, the most vital movement mortals feel  
Is hope : the balm and life-blood of the soul.  
It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent Heaven  
Sent down the kind delusion, thro' the paths  
Of rugged life to lead us patient on ;  
And make our happiest state no tedious thing.  
Our greatest good, and what we least can spare,  
Is hope : the last of all our evils, fear.

But there are passions grateful to the breast,  
And yet no friends to life : perhaps they please  
Or to excess, and dissipate the soul ;  
Or while they please, torment. The stubborn clown,  
The ill-tam'd ruffian, and pale userer,  
(If love's omnipotence such hearts can mould)  
May safely mellow into love ; and grow  
Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.  
Love in such bosoms never to a fault  
Or pains or pleasures. But, ye finer souls,  
Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill  
With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,  
That beauty gives ; with caution and reserve  
Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose,  
Nor court too much the queen of charming cares.  
For, while the cherish'd poison in your breast  
Ferments and maddens ; sick with jealousy,  
Absence, distrust, or even with anxious joy,  
The wholesome appetites and powers of life  
Dissolve in languor. The coy stomach loathes  
The genial board : your cheerful days are gone ;  
The generous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled.  
To sighs devoted and to tender pains,  
Pensive you sit, or solitary stray,  
And waste your youth in musing. Musing first  
Toy'd into care your unsuspecting heart :  
It found a liking there, a sportful fire,  
And that fomented into serious love ;  
Which musing daily strengthens and improves  
Thro' all the heights of fondness and romance :  
And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped,  
If once you doubt whether you love or no.

The body wastes away ; th' infected mind,  
 Dissolv'd in female tenderness, forgets  
 Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.  
 Sweet Heaven, from such intoxicating charms  
 Defend all worthy breasts ! Not that I deem  
 Love always dangerous, always to be shunn'd.  
 Love well repaid, and not too weakly sunk  
 In wanton and unmanly tenderness,  
 Adds bloom to health ; o'er ev'ry virtue sheds  
 A gay, humane, a sweet, and generous grace,  
 And brightens all the ornaments of man.  
 But fruitless, hopeless, disappointed, rack'd  
 With jealousy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,  
 Too serious, or too languishingly fond,  
 Unnerves the body and unmans the soul.  
 And some have died for love ; and some run mad ;  
 And some with desperate hands themselves have slain.

Some to extinguish, others to prevent,  
 A mad devotion to one dangerous fair,  
 Court all they meet ; in hopes to dissipate  
 The cares of love amongst an hundred brides.  
 Th' event is doubtful : for there are who find  
 A cure in this ; there are who find it not,  
 'Tis no relief, alas ! it rather galls  
 The wound, to those who are sincerely sick.  
 For while from feverish and tumultuous joys  
 The nerves grow languid, and the soul subsides,  
 The tender fancy smarts with every sting,  
 And what was love before is madness now.  
 Is health your care, or luxury your aim,  
 Be temperate still : when Nature bids, obey ;

Her wild impatient fallies bear no curb :  
 But when the prurient habit of delight,  
 Or loose imagination, spurs you on  
 To deeds above your strength, impute it not  
 To nature, nature all compulsion hates.  
 Ah ! let nor luxury nor vain renown  
 Urge you to feats you well might sleep without ;  
 To make what should be rapture a fatigue,  
 A tedious task ; nor in the wanton arms  
 Of twining Lais melt your manhood down.  
 For from the colliquation of soft joys  
 How chang'd you rise ! the ghost of what you was !  
 Languid, and melancholy, and gaunt, and wan ;  
 Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.  
 Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood  
 Grows vapid phlegm ; along the tender nerves  
 (To each slight impulse tremblingly awake) ·  
 A subtle fiend that mimics all the plagues,  
 Rapid and restless springs from part to part.  
 The blooming honours of your youth are fallen ;  
 Your vigour pines ; your vital powers decay ;  
 Diseases haunt you ; and untimely age  
 Creeps on ; unsocial, impotent, and lewd.  
 Infatuate, impious, epicure ! to waste  
 The stores of pleasure, cheerfulness, and health !  
 Infatuate all who make delight their trade,  
 And coy perdition every hour pursue.

Who pines with love, or in lascivious flames  
 Consumes, is with his own consent undone ;  
 He chooses to be wretched, to be mad ;  
 And warn'd proceeds, and wilful to his fate.

But there's a passion, whose tempestuous sway  
Tears up each virtue planted in the breast,  
And shakes to ruins proud philosophy.  
For pale and trembling Anger rushes in,  
With salt'ring speech, and eyes that wildly stare ;  
Fierce as the tiger, madder than the seas,  
Desperate, and arm'd with more than mortal strength.  
How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd man  
Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !  
Who pines in love, or wastes with silent cares,  
Envy, or ignominy, or tender grief,  
Slowly descends, and ling'ring, to the shades.  
But he whom anger stings, drops, if he dies,  
At once, and rushes apoplectic down ;  
Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell.  
For, as the body thro' unnumber'd strings  
Reverberates each vibration of the soul ;  
As is the passion, such is still the pain  
The body feels ; or chronic, or acute.  
And oft a sudden storm at once o'erpowers  
The life, or gives your reason to the winds.  
Such fates attend the rash alarm of fear,  
And sudden grief, and rage, and joy.

There are, meantime, to whom the boist'rous fit  
Is health, and only fills the sails of life.  
For where the mind a torpid winter leads,  
Wrapt in a body corpulent and cold,  
And each clogg'd function lazily moves on ;  
A generous folly spurns th' incumbent load,  
Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow.  
But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,

Or are your nerves too irritably strung,  
Wave all dispute ; be cautious, if you joke ;  
Keep Lent forever, and forswear the bowl.  
For one rash moment sends you to the shades,  
Or shatters ev'ry hopeful scheme of life.  
And gives to horror all your days to come.  
Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague,  
That ruins, tortures, or distracts mankind,  
And makes the happy wretched in an hour,  
O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible  
As your own wrath, nor gives more sudden blows.

While choler works, good friend, you may be wrong ;  
Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight.  
'Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave ;  
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die.  
But calm advice against a raging fit  
Avails too little ; and it braves the power  
Of all that ever taught in prose or song,  
To tame the fiend that sleeps a gentle lamb,  
And wakes a lion. Unprovok'd and calm,  
You reason well ; see as you ought to see,  
And wonder at the madness of mankind :  
Seiz'd with the common rage, you soon forget  
'The speculations of your wiser hours.  
Beset with furies of all deadly shapes,  
Tierce and insidious, violent and slow :  
With all that urge or lure us on to fate :  
What refuge shall we seek ? what arms prepare ?  
Where reason proves too weak, or void of wiles  
To cope with subtle or impetuous powers,  
I would invoke new passions to your aid :



With indignation would extinguish fear,  
With fear or generous pity vanquish rage,  
And love with pride ; and force to force oppose.

There is a charm, a power, that sways the breast ;  
Bids every passion revel or be still ;  
Inspires with rage, or all your cares dissolves ;  
Can sooth distraction, and almost despair.  
That power is music : far beyond the stretch  
Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage ;  
Those clumsy heroes, those fat-headed gods,  
Who move no passion justly but contempt :  
Who, like our dancers (light indeed and strong !)  
Do wond'rous feats, but never heard of grace.  
The fault is ours ; we bear those monstrous arts ;  
Good heaven ! we praise them : we, with loudest peals,  
Applaud the fool that highest lifts his heels ;  
And, with insipid shew of rapture, die  
Of idiot notes impertinently long.  
But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,  
A poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire ;  
Who, with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,  
Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul ;  
Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain,  
In love dissolves you ; now in sprightly strains  
Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast ;  
Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad ;  
Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.  
Such was the bard, whose heavenly strains of old  
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul.  
Such was, if old and heathen fame say true,  
The man who bade the Theban deities ascend,

And tam'd the savage nations with his song ;  
And such the Thracian, whose melodious lyre,  
Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep ;  
Sooth'd e'en th' inexorable powers of hell,  
And half redcem'd his lost Eurydice.  
Music exalts each joy, allays each grief,  
Expels diseases, softens every pain,  
Subdues the rage of poison, and the plague ;  
And hence the wise of ancient days ador'd  
One power of phyfic, melody, and song.

*FINIS.*





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